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Grounded ship to be sunk in Laulau Bay. PAGE 2

DLNR once again told to pay Pellegrino, MRC. PAGE 3

Landfill now 67 percent full

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Approximately 67 percent of the two constructed cells at the $10 million Marpi landfill have already been used since the facility's opening in 2003.

The cells could have been almost filled to capacity by now were it not for best management practices by the Department of Public Works, including the recycling of about 27 percent or 69,531 tons of all the trash hauled to the landfill in six years, it was learned yesterday.

Plans are now in place for additional cells in the landfill, and it calls for low-technology waste volume reduction, including composting, as part of the value-engineering specific design and development of the site.

Steve Hiney, solid waste technical consultant for DPW, yesterday said the landfill site

See LANDFILL on Page 4

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

WALL OF HEARTS
Emerenciana "Menchang" Reyes, 69, walks past a wall of cutout hearts at San Antonio Elementary School where she performed traditional and contemporary Chamorro songs for second graders as part of the Cultural Week celebrations.

OUT OF 300 ANTICIPATED APPLICANTS:

Only 63 apply for part-time scholarships at NMC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College expected up to 300 applicants for its part-time scholarship program, but only 63 individuals have applied for educational financial assistance offered by the CNMI Scholarship Office.

Scholarship Office administrator Merissa Seman-Rasa said yesterday that since they started accepting applications in November, only a few individuals

See ONLY on Page 4

Massage parlors band together to remain in Garapan district

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

At least seven massage parlors want their masseuses licensed by the government and are complying with other requirements of the Saipan Zoning Law to be able to continue operating in the tourist district of Garapan beyond September.

Currently, there is no licensing requirement for those who want to be employed as a masseuse at

See MASSAGE on Page 4

"We are willing to comply with the law...otherwise, we'll be asked to move out of Garapan in September and if that happens, we will lose our investments and revenue."

3 education officials fly to DC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Three Public School System officials flew to Washington, D.C. yesterday to meet with the U.S. House of Representatives' Education Committee chairman and perhaps even secure an audience with President Obama.

Local PSS officials hope to talk with the U.S. president about the CNMI's share in the stimulus economic package that will go through public schools.

See EDUCATION on Page 4

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Is the CNMI government doing enough to cut down on unnecessary spending?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

148 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Korean Threat
North Korea said Tuesday it is preparing to shoot a satellite into orbit.

ASIA...Page 16

Spotting a Lie
Science is closing in on humanoids and their seedy necessity to lie about almost everything.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

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Local

JP CENTER HAIDEE EUGENIO

Christine touches the engraved face of her father, the late *Saipan Tribune* publisher JP Pangelinan, after the unveiling of the marker that officially renamed the CIC Centre on Beach Road, Garapan, into the JP Center, held yesterday afternoon. The renaming, unveiling of the marker, and the blessing of the building was attended by Pangelinan's family, members, relatives, friends, colleagues, and members of the Tan Holdings family.

Grounded ship to be sunk in Laulau Bay

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A sea vessel that ran aground at the Sea Plane Ramps in Lower Base several years ago is being considered for sinking in Laulau Bay to create a new dive site for local and foreign scuba divers.

The rusting M/V Charito, which sits abandoned near the Port of Saipan, would be cleaned of pollutants then refloated and towed to Laulau Bay by the USNS Safeguard, according to the Marianas Visitors Authority.

MVA is applying for a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the ship sinking project.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is now soliciting public comments about the impacts of the proposed activity on the general environment, endangered species, historic properties and water quality, among other things.

Deadline for comments on the proposed project is March 3.

MVA proposed to sink the M/V Charito in Laulau Bay on a sand bottom in order to create another dive site for local and tourist scuba divers.

The vessel will be anchored with concrete anchors to prevent the vessel from moving in the event of storms, MVA said.

According to the Army Corps public notice dated Feb. 2, MVA has incorporated into the proposed project some mitigation efforts to reduce the impacts to the aquatic environment, including cleaning of the vessel according to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards.

After cleaning, the USEPA and U.S. Coast Guard marine safety officer must inspect and approve the cleaning prior to the vessel leaving the harbor and being towed to the site.

"The project would not have the same effect if moved to a non-aquatic setting. The vessel has little to no historic value. Site election and mitigation of any adverse effects on the environment have been considered, balanced off against the potential economic benefit the project would have," the public notice said.

The Army Corps said comments are used in the preparation of an environmental assessment and/or an environmental impact statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Deportation sought for man in 'ice' case

The Division of Immigration has sought for the deportation of a former garment worker who was recently convicted of possessing methamphetamine hydrochloride or "ice."

Assistant attorney general Kathleen R. Busenkell asked the Superior Court to order Dong Huang to appear in court and explain why he should not be deported.

Busenkell said Huang is a deportable alien in that he has committed one felony—illegal possession of a controlled substance. The government lawyer said the respondent has consented to deportation to China.

Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona sentenced Huang to two years in prison last Feb. 4.

Manglona said Huang is not subject to suspension of sentence, parole or probation.

The judge, however, gave the defendant credit for the time he has already served in jail since June 4, 2008.

Accordingly, Manglona said, Huang shall be released from the Department of Corrections on June 4, 2010.

After serving the prison term, the judge said Huang will be deported. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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DLNR again told to pay Pellegrino, MRC

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

For the third time, the Superior Court has ordered the CNMI government to pay its $5.65 million debt plus interest to businessman Anthony Pellegrino and his Marine Revitalization Corp.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman, in a decision issued yesterday, warned that the court will not hesitate to promptly address the Department of Lands and Natural Resources' future noncompliance.

Wiseman described DLNR's non-compliance with the court's two previous orders as "bizarre and cavalier."

"Failing to fulfill their contractual duties and then disregarding the court's orders that followed can create an environment of distrust and may shape an unsavory reputation for the Commonwealth. A noble reputation takes great effort to build and may be destroyed suddenly," he said.

The judge incorporated his two prior orders in the case in his third order.

Wiseman directed DLNR to pay on or before April 1, 2009, to MRC's lawyer the $20,000 that the court previously ordered be paid in May 2005, plus accumulated interest at a rate of 9 percent from May 2005 to the date of payment.

Wiseman said DLNR shall pay all biweekly income it gets from its operations at the Outer Cove Marina, including boat slip rental fees, to cover MRC's costs in executing the court's judgment.

He required DLNR to report to the court by April 30, 2009, on what efforts have been made to obtain an appropriation of funds by the Legislature to pay the judgment. Wiseman also ordered DLNR to report on what has been collected out of DLNR's operation.

Wiseman authorized MRC and Pellegrino and their other businesses to use a portion of the $5.65 million judgment plus interest as a dollar-for-dollar offset against the CNMI Gross Revenue Tax.

In the event the order is not complied with, the judge said that Pellegrino and MRC are authorized to seek an order garnishing federal funds, appropriating portions of DLNR's budget, and obtaining a contempt order from the court.

Wiseman said it is not his intention, nor Pellegrino's and MRC's, to compound an already dire economic situation.

"However, the reputation of the Commonwealth cannot afford the long term consequences of a government which accepts the benefits of a contract, refuses to fulfill their own obligations, and ignores judgments which they have stipulated to," he stressed.

These actions, Wiseman said, not only create an appearance of impropriety but they develop a precedent and a standards of operations within the CNMI which has far-reaching consequences that will no doubt impede and prevent the attraction of investments in the future development of the Commonwealth.

The judge added that DLNR's debt to MRC is worsening daily—inevitably increasing the harm not only to MRC but to the entire CNMI.

According to MRC and Pellegrino's counsel, Michael Dotts, the amount owed as of June 2008 was $7,735,623 and is currently accruing interest at a rate of $43,790 a month.

Pellegrino established MRC to build the Outer Cove Marina in the mid-90's. The goal was to turn it over to the government. Arbitrators concluded that the marina project was a viable venture at that time because Saipan has limited mooring space at the Smiling Cove.

A dispute between MRC and the government arose in 2001 after the government not only failed to bar commercial vessels from renting slip space at Smiling Cove, but also actively solicited commercial lessees.

DLNR agreed to a judgment of the court ordering it to pay more than $5 million to MRC or Pellegrino.

The court's first ruling, entered in May 2005, ordered DLNR to pay $20,000 "forthwith" to MRC, and to pay all income from DLNR operations into the court bi-weekly. DLNR did not comply.

The court's second ruling, entered in May 2008, again ordered the prompt payment of the $20,000, this time by a date certain, and also allowed MRC to recoup the balance of the judgment through tax credits. DLNR filed no objection and did not even appear at the hearing. The agency still did not pay the $20,000.

In September 2008, DLNR filed a motion to quash and or modify the court's orders. DLNR did not dispute that there is a judgment against it and that the entire amount is outstanding but claimed that the judgment can only be paid by specific appropriation of the Legislature and no such appropriation has been made.

Wiseman disagreed with the DLNR. He ruled that the separation of powers principles bestows upon the Judiciary the tools to enforce judgments of the court. Wiseman said the court's ability to do so "cannot be crippled by an uncooperative government defendant."

Come together to build vision—Sablan

Rep. Tina Sablan is calling on citizens to come together to discuss the issues affecting the Commonwealth.

Beginning today through March 25, Sablan is calling on concerned citizens to hold sunrise meetings to gather a cohesive vision.

"They're really just what we're all doing anyway, all over the island," she said, adding that it could be over coffee, during Happy Hour or at other gatherings.

People are already discussing ideas and issues, she said.

"So this is kind of doing what you were doing anyway, but giving it focus," the representative added.

Sablan suggested some questions that could be discussed, such as, what should the role of government be in the Commonwealth? And, what core principles and values should guide the government of the Commonwealth?

The representative is asking sunrise meeting participants to take notes so they can be compiled into one cohesive plan. In April, that plan will be put for public comment. Hopefully, she said, there will be candidates for the 2009 election who are willing to champion the vision.

"That's the short term goal. I think there are great ideas out there," she said.

The idea is nothing new, Sablan said. She heard President Obama did something similar and held platform meetings during his campaign.

"It was the same thing," she said. "Everyone was just coming together…to build the democratic platform." ***(Kristi Eaton)***

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'US is responsible for defense of CNMI'

The Fitial administration said yesterday the CNMI relies on the United States for the defense of the islands under the Covenant agreement, following a report issued Monday by South Korea's Defense Ministry that North Korea had deployed a new intermediate-range ballistic missile that could threaten the CNMI's neighbor Guam.

Guam is less than 50 miles from Rota, the southernmost island of the CNMI.

The CNMI's capital of Saipan lies about 125 miles northeast of Guam, which has American military bases.

The new missile, according to national reports quoting South Korea's Defense Ministry, can travel about 1,900 miles or 3,000 kilometers carrying a 1,400-lb warhead, possibly putting U.S. military bases on Guam within striking distance.

"Under our Covenant agreement with the United States, the U.S. is responsible for the defense of these islands. We rely on the United States for the CNMI's security. The CNMI is a Commonwealth of the United States," press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. told Saipan Tribune yesterday when asked for comment on the defense report.

North Korea, however, insisted that what it planned to launch was a scientific satellite and not a missile theoretically capable of reaching Hawaii, Alaska and Guam. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

ERRATUM AND CLARIFICATION

In Tuesday's story, 'I succeeded as AG, was not appointed,' it was reported that Acting Attorney General Gregory Baka and press secretary Charles Reyes have said there was no vacancy because, as deputy, Baka automatically succeeded the previous AG. This is incorrect. Baka does not assert that there is no vacancy to be filled in the position of CNMI Attorney General. It should be clarified that in a previously published article Reyes said that if there had been no deputy to fill the position, then there would be a vacancy and someone would need to be nominated. Saipan Tribune regrets the error.

Closing arguments in 'ice' case

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The prosecution and the defense held their closing arguments yesterday in the ongoing federal jury trial of a former garment worker who reportedly yielded the third largest haul so far of methamphetamine hydrochloride or "ice" in the CNMI.

Assistant U.S. Attorney James Benedetto argued that Song does not have a defense that can stand up in this case, citing statements of witnesses and defendant Yong Ming Song's as well as other pieces of evidence.

"This case is not about whether you like the Drug Enforcement Administration; it is about whether there is proof beyond reasonable doubt," Benedetto said.

The prosecutor pointed to a hollowed-out book, Western Union receipts of $10,000 sent to China in two days, and the use of an "ice" trafficker's cell phone as evidence of Song's knowing participation in "ice" trafficking.

Benedetto pointed out that 149 grams of "ice" worth between $60,000 to $75,000 were seized from Song's vehicle.

Defense attorney Joey San Nicolas compared the U.S. government's case to the famous cartoon character Spongebob Squarepants, saying the prosecution's case "is full of holes."

San Nicolas also cited statements of government witnesses that, according to him, contained inconsistencies.

LANDFILL

From Page 1

plan calls for the building of six cells with an estimated capacity of approximately 20 years.

"Through application of best management practices, DPW has been able to extend the life of the existing cells," he told Saipan Tribune.

The Marpi landfill has received a total of 257,043 tons of trash since 2003.

Of this total, 69,531 tons or some 27 percent have been recycled, and the rest were disposed of in the landfill.

"Of the two constructed cells, we have utilized approximately 67 percent of existing capacity," Hiney added.

The Marpi landfill, which was opened when the Puerto Rico dump was closed to the public in 2003, can accept up to 100 tons of waste per day and diverts 3 to 5 tons of trash a day to recycling.

DPW is the permit holder for the site and has direct operational management over the landfill. This is accomplished through public-private partnerships to secure needed equipment such as a compactor and bulldozers, as well as the testing required, security, and pest control.

The current tipping fees in the landfill remain at $25 a ton for commercial waste and $35 a ton for special waste. The government has no current plans to raise these tipping fees.

The Marpi landfill is the first fully compliant municipal landfill in the Pacific territories. It includes site-support facilities, small-haulers drop-off area, diesel electrical power generation facility, 12-acre lined waste management unit, 5-million gallon leachate storage pond, water and wastewater systems, stormwater control systems, fuel storage systems, and site access roads and parking.

In regional environmental conferences, the construction of the Marpi landfill has always been recognized as one of the solid waste success stories in the CNMI and the region.

MASSAGE

From Page 1

massage parlors on Saipan.

But seven massage parlors are now banding together to form a business association that will uphold the masseuse profession and come up with a code of conduct so as not to be lumped together with so-called "adult businesses."

Kin Wan, secretary of the proposed Saipan Professional Massage Committee, told Saipan Tribune yesterday that the group's members are legitimate massage parlors that have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in renovations to comply with the zoning law.

"We are willing to comply with the law. We agree to have our masseuses licensed; otherwise, we'll be asked to move out of Garapan in September and if that happens, we will lose our investments and revenue," Wan said.

He cited as an example Pure Spa, which spent some $200,000 to renovate its facility in Garapan to make it look better and cleaner, to comply with the zoning law.

The proposed Saipan Professional Massage Committee consists so far of Mirage Massage, Light Massage, Relax Massage, VIP Massage, Pure Spa, Palms Springs Spa, and Dolphin Salon.

"Business is bad. …Around 9pm, not a lot of tourists and others can be seen in Garapan. Can you imagine if even massage parlors move out of Garapan in September? We want to stay in Garapan. We are legitimate massage parlors and we want to comply with government requirements," said Wan, adding that Mirage Massage, for example, has been operating on the island for 18 years.

Members of the group have been meeting with Zoning administrator Steve Tilley on how to best comply with the requirements of the law.

Tilley, in a separate interview yesterday, said by forming a business association, legitimate massage parlors can come up with a set of standards that will enhance their business image.

He said the Zoning Office acknowledges the willingness of several massage parlors to make the necessary changes to comply with the law.

Tilley confirmed that the same group of massage parlors expressed willingness to have their masseuses licensed or certified by the professional licensing board.

Adult businesses in Garapan have until March 1 to comply with the Saipan Zoning Law.

Tilley said by March 2, the Zoning Office will start issuing fines of up to $1,000 per day to businesses that don't comply.

Some examples of the requirements for adult business building design are: screening openings so the public can't see inside; posting signs to prevent minors from entering; no outdoor loudspeakers; lighted walkways; and clean and neat exterior.

For adult business signs, the following need to be complied with: not using flashing lights, neon or other internally illuminated signs or up-lighting; using English text with non-English in exact translation and not larger than the English; not more than one primary and one secondary sign that meet specific size requirements; and using solid color letters and background.

"Adult business" includes massage parlors, strip clubs, porno shops, and other places that meet the specific definition in the Saipan Zoning Law.

Bars and karaoke clubs that have bar girls or hostesses but do not display specified anatomical areas or specified sexual activities are not considered adult businesses. Mainline video stores that have an adult section where minors are not allowed may also be exempt.

To help businesses comply, the Zoning Office will be conducting training sessions on March 10 and 12 at the Multi-Purpose Building in Susupe about the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008.

EDUCATION

From Page 1

Board of Education vice chair Herman T. Guerrero yesterday confirmed that the travel of Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan, along with two other officials, is slated from Feb. 24 through March 1.

Sablan flew to the U.S. mainland with PSS federal programs Tim Thornburgh and financial consultant Ed Tenorio.

Guerrero said the trip was an invitation extended by the White House to Sablan and other chief executives of public schools in all U.S. states.

"The commissioner has been invited—along with other chiefs of education in other states—to attend a meeting at the White House and perhaps with the new president of U.S. The main agenda is the stimulus money that the U.S. president wants for public education," Guerrero said, adding that the CNMI commissioner's group had prepared information and documentation that may help them in their negotiations with U.S. officials.

Last week, CNMI Delegate Gregorio Sablan met on island with education officials and Board of Education members.

Although the meeting didn't tackle specifics of the stimulus plan, Guerrero said it was a positive development for public schools as the package intends to bring progress to education.

"We need to start moving the packet together. We also need some guidelines and some direct assistance from the top education officials…that's the reason we're counting on this trip of the commissioner," Guerrero said.

In an e-mail to Saipan Tribune this week, Board of Education chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita said the board had instructed the PSS leadership to work on a plan on how the stimulus money will be utilized by CNMI PSS.

"The PSS leadership is working on reviewing the law, the PSS projects, and prioritizing them. Then they will refer their recommendations to the board for action. We expect that PSS will complete their tasks within two weeks as we need to move fast on the stimulus package," Blanco-Maratita said.

$31K travel cost

Saipan Tribune learned that the travel expenses of the commissioner, along with the federal program officer and financial consultant, will amount to $31,000.

The amount, which will be sourced from the innovative assistance program of the federal government, covers the per diem allowance of the three officials.

Named acting commissioner of education yesterday was Jackie Quitugua, who is also PSS' associate commissioner for instruction and curriculum.

ONLY

From Page 1

applied for the program for the Spring 2009 term.

The financial assistance is offered to full-time employees in both government and private sectors who want to enroll as part-time students at NMC.

"We only received 63 applicants for the part-time scholarship program [for this spring 2009]. The number is far fewer than our target number of 200 to 300 recipients," she said.

Of the 63 applicants, only 35 have been approved, three were denied, and the rest are working on the requirements of the program, Seman-Rasa added.

"We will wait until Friday this week…for the submission of incomplete documents from the applicants," she said.

Under the scholarship rules, a part-time student needs between six to 11 credits, while full-time students are required to obtain 10 credits and above.

Seman-Rasa said the scholarship office allocated $800 for each part-time student, while full-time students would get $1,980 per semester.

She said scholarship applicants followed the same requirements as the educational assistance program rules and regulations.

The administrator believes that economic issues remain the top factor to explain the low turnout of applicants.

"Because the choice is just between work and school, a lot of people just don't want to be bothered in their job. This, I believe, is one consideration," she added.

Seman-Rasa said there are applicants who later decide to become full-time students after considering the amount of the assistance—from $800 for part-time students to $1,980 for full-time ones.

She said a lack of information about the program was not the reason for the low enrollment because both NMC and the scholarship office were active in disseminating information on time.

The continuation of the part-time scholarship, Seman-Rasa added, will depend on the availability of funds for the program.

She admitted that this may only be a one-shot assistance solely for this spring semester.

The CNMI Scholarship Office is offering three scholarship programs in addition to part-time scholarship grant. These include honor scholarship, which provides up to $15,000 yearly to qualified applicants and currently has 45-50 beneficiaries obtaining their degrees abroad. The teacher scholarship program, meantime, provides up to $12,000 yearly per student. There are currently four scholars under this category who are all finishing the duration of their grants.

The third existing scholarship is the educational assistance grant, which has 1,090 beneficiaries. Each scholar is provided $1,980 per semester, equivalent to over $3,000 for Spring and Fall semesters.

The scholarship board had decided to offer the part-time scholarship program to assist individuals on island who want to attain their educational goals while working full time. Some $250,000 from the local scholarship trust fund was identified for this program.

Fishing considerations around FDM pushed

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

At a public hearing Monday night about the Environmental Impact Statement concerning the Marianas Islands Range Complex, Reps. Ramon A. Tebuteb and Diego T. Benavente asked U.S. Defense representatives to remember the importance of fishing to the people of the CNMI.

A possible alternative in the Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement is to increase the restricted area from three nautical miles to 10 nautical miles around the Farallon de Mendinilla.

That is prime fishing area, Benavente said at the hearing attended by about 30 people.

"These waters…represent perhaps the most fertile fishing grounds readily accessible to local fisherman, whether they be commercial or subsistence," the representative said.

While he said he acknowledges the hard work undertaken by the Navy, he said he is concerned the proposed restriction increase is inconsistent with the Covenant agreement.

Tebuteb shared similar statements.

"If the CNMI owns water around FDM and Tinian, as stipulated in the lease agreement, are we the now the lesser of U.S. citizens? In this public forum, the proposed 10 mile radius, where does CNMI approval of range rest?"

Ed Lynch, program manager for the MIRC Pacific Fleet, said he knew the proposed increase needed public comment and a dialogue would need to be started.

"I think we've started that dialogue, and I think that dialogue will continue," he said after the meeting.

The issue is safety around bombing ranges for the fishermen, he said.

"Training there is very hazardous," he said during the presentation, adding that there is naval gunfire and weapons dropping from aircraft.

"That bombing range is essential to the national defense of our country…. it is the only western Pacific live fire bombing range we have, western Pacific live fire bombing. It's essential we maintain it. It's essential we have the ability to use it. On the other hand, it's essential we use it in a safe manner."

Another issue is notification procedures, Lynch said. A suggestion was made to use the weather channel in order to notify fishermen before any activities take place, he said.

"That's a very valid, a very good comment. I can tell you that will be included in the final environmental impact statement," he said, adding that it might also be implemented immediately.

A public hearing was scheduled to take place on Tinian last night, and an open house and public hearing is scheduled tomorrow at Sinapalo Elementary School on Rota at 5 pm.

The public comment continues through March 16. The final EIS/OEIS is scheduled for late 2009. After a 30-day public comment period, a record of decision will be signed.

BIKE PATROL (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)
Nine Police Officers from the Department of Public Safety and four Ports Police Officers from the Commonwealth Ports Authority undergo a five-day police bike patrol training instructed by Officer Jason Tarkong and assisted by Officer J.J. Cabrera.

House could take up budget issue again

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The third time may be the charm for the House of Representatives today.

After deferring voting on overriding the governor's veto of the $156.76 million fiscal year 2009 budget bill because of absent members, the House is expected to take up the issue today.

The House has twice held off voting because members were not present. Some of the members absent in the past are expected to be present today.

Last week, House Speaker Arnold Palacios said a vote would occur "one way or another."

"We're going to vote on it regardless, whether we have the numbers or not," he said last week. "We will all vote with our conscience and sense of commitment to public policy. I think we've gone around and around and around on this issue. I think at the end of the day each of us must articulate our own reason for our own vote and position."

The Senate has already overridden the veto.

Gov. Benigno Fitial vetoed the latest budget attempt because of a lack of austerity measures in the bill.

Rep. Victor B. Hocog has introduced an administration-supported measure that reinstates austerity Fridays/unpaid holidays, cuts employer contribution to the Retirement Fund from 18 percent to 11 percent, and grants full reprogramming power to all expenditure authorities. Under House Bill 16-223, top officials including the governor, lieutenant governor, lawmakers, justices, and judges are encouraged to waive 10 percent of their salaries.

In December, Fitial vetoed the Legislature's first budget of $165 million, citing an $8 million drop in projected local revenue. The latest budget reduced the spending level by $8 million but did not include austerity measures like unpaid holidays. The House was unsuccessful in overriding that veto.

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AFTER ALMOST A DECADE

'CNMI still not treating mentally-ill persons'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It's been almost a decade since a mentally ill man attacked and killed an alien worker on Saipan yet the CNMI government has yet to accomplish anything to treat mentally-ill persons in the Commonwealth, according to former attorney general Robert Tenorio Torres.

Torres said nothing much has changed since the 2000 case of Dwayne M. Sibetang, who is serving a 15-year prison term for the murder of an alien worker. As the chief public defender then, Torres represented Sibetang in the murder case.

"What forensic treatment facility has been established? None. Almost a decade later, what has been accomplished in treating our mentally-ill persons under the Patient's Rights Act? Nothing," the lawyer told Saipan Tribune when asked for comments about the situation of Eria Elliot.

The 28-year-old Elliot has been in and out in jail due to several criminal charges, mostly from assaulting people and disturbing the peace. Judges also issued numerous bench warrants for his arrest for not appearing at court hearings.

In a June 2006 medical report, a psychiatrist, Dr. Willie Gutowski, disclosed that Elliot has been a patient at the Commonwealth Health Center for acute psychosis related to alcohol and marijuana abuse. Gutowski said Elliot suffers from schizophrenia and has auditory hallucinations. He, however, determined that Elliot was competent to stand trial.

Court papers showed that Sibetang, armed with a knife, broke into a semi-concrete structure house near the Coco Garden on Capital Hill on March 16, 2000, and killed Dong Che Ma and wounded Xing Fan Li.

In 2005, Sibetang entered an Alford plea, which is basically the same as a guilty plea. Under such plea, he maintained he was not cognizant of what transpired at the time of the incident.

The court ordered Sibetang to spend 15 years in prison.

Torres maintained that being detained at the Department of Corrections is not in the best interest of Sibetang since he needs adequate treatment in a well-equipped facility.

Torres, however, also recognizes that the general public is at risk if Sibetang is placed at CHC since it is an unsecured place.

In July 2000, then Superior Court associate judge Timothy H. Bellas ordered the CNMI government to certify on or before July 12, 2000, that the corrections facility where Sibetang was being detained conforms with the requirements of the Patient's Rights Act and the Criminal Commitment Act.

Both the PRA and CCA require that Sibetang receive prompt and adequate treatment by qualified mental health professionals.

At the same time, Bellas said, the CNMI government should certify that the CHC's treatment facility where Sibetang is receiving treatment is sufficiently staffed with qualified mental health professionals.

In 2006, the Public Defender's Office under then chief public defender Elisa A. Long was still pushing for an independent psychiatric evaluation of Sibetang.

Long noted that throughout the proceedings, the court repeatedly found that the government came up short in its care and treatment of Sibetang.

With respect to Elliot's situation, Torres inquired about the cost to society when a person with mental illness is left to his own without treatment because the government has no money.

"Imagine being a parent or sibling of that person—where persons are 'rejected' or barred from CHC for lack of a psychiatrist. Imagine the court's frustration that case after case is left unresolved and there is no choice except to 'warehouse' the mentally ill," Torres said.

"Someone said that 'insanity is doing the same thing over and over.' Perhaps it is not Mr. Elliot who suffers from mental illness," the lawyer added.

Elliot used to be a bright, smart student of William S. Reyes Elementary School. In the early 1990s, WSR was a dominant school in table tennis competition in the Public School System and Elliot was one of the WSR top players.

Retired teacher Val Welch earlier disclosed to Saipan Tribune that Elliot's step mother is a Palauan, but actually his real mother is from Kiribati.

Welch said Elliot didn't know his mother because he left Kiribati when he was very young with his father.

Apparently, Elliot's parents separated ways. His father took the then young boy to Saipan.

Saipan Tribune learned that Elliot's father is a Caucasian who previously worked at the Superior Court.

Welch said Elliot became particularly excited when he talked with his mother for the first time on the phone.

"He couldn't speak directly to her because she doesn't understand English and he doesn't speak Kiribati," Welch said.

He said an opportunity to really help Elliot was lost when he was not sent to Kiribati after talking with his mother because at the time "that was all he could think about."

6.1 quake strikes off the Mariana Islands

An earthquake measuring 6.1 struck off the Northern Mariana Islands Tuesday, US geologists said, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties.

The strong quake occurred at 3:58pm (0558 GMT), 165 kilometers (105 miles) from the main island Saipan and at a depth of 10 kilometers, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Despite the size of the quake, residents in Saipan said it had no noticeable impact. ***(The News International)***

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BRUCE L. MAILMAN is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and has provided immigration services in the CNMI since 1989

MAYA B. KARA is a former CNMI Acting Attorney General, Chief Legislative Counsel, Governor's and Lt. Governor's Legal Counsel and DOL Hearing Officer

IF NO BUDGET IS PASSED FOR FY2009

Scholarship Office may reduce its assistance

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Scholarship Office yesterday said it may have to reduce the financial assistance it extends to scholars if it continues to operate under the current budget.

Scholarship administrator Merissa Seman-Rasa said that failure to pass a new budget for Fiscal Year 2009 may result in lower grant assistance for CNMI scholars both here and abroad. "I am hoping they would pass the budget," she said.

Rasa's office receives approximately $3.3 million every year based on the continuing budget resolution. From the figure, only a mere $50,000 is taken out for her and one other staffer's wages.

"Most likely we will reduce the scholars' assistance if there would be no new budget passed for this fiscal year," Seman-Rasa said, adding that the current $1,980 financial assistance per scholar may go down to less than $1,500 per semester.

Per year, approximately $400,000 of the $3.3 million fund also goes to the honor scholarship program, according to the administrator.

In school year 2006-2007, majority of scholars were getting $1,500, which was increased to $1,980 in school years 2007-2008 and 2008-009.

Seman-Rasa said there are a total of 1,090 scholars under the educational assistance program, the biggest recipients among all its programs.

In the past five years, she said their numbers have been "stable."

Seman-Rasa also disclosed that from the original five personnel, her office now employs only two staff, including herself.

"We've been understaffed," she said, adding they do all the collections, filing, and assisting scholars in their requirements.

The scholarship office was also not spared from the 5.5 percent across-the-board budget cut recently implemented by the Fitial administration.

The CNMI Scholarship Office offers three scholarship programs in addition to part-time scholarship grants. These include honor scholarships, which provide up to $15,000 yearly to qualified applicants; the teacher scholarship program, which provides up to $12,000 yearly per student; and the educational assistance grant, which has 1,090 beneficiaries. Each scholar is provided $1,980 per semester, equivalent to over $3,000 for Spring and Fall semesters.

Law yet to be enforced

Early last year, the governor signed Public Law 15-109, which established the scholarship program for medical students and teachers on island.

However, Seman-Rasa confirmed yesterday that the law hasn't been implemented by her office due to lack of funding.

Under the law, $250,000 is identified to be used for teachers and medical scholarship program. Fifteen individuals are set to benefit each term from the program: five medical students and 10 for teachers' scholarship.

"Unfortunately, we haven't implemented it because they [Legislature] haven't given us the money for the purpose," she said.

She disclosed that if CNMI Scholarship Office enforces the law, "we may get the money from the same funding source, which is not enough."

Seman-Rasa hopes that funding for this purpose will actually be provided so her office could begin the program.

NMC hosts free workshop on innovative farming techniques

After years of researching innovative farming techniques to conserve water and soil, the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research, Education, and Extension Service will be sharing its findings in a workshop for CNMI ranchers, farmers, and other interested community members.

The workshop, titled "Soil & Water Conservation through Innovative Farming Techniques," will be held at NMC CREES' experimental farm in As Perdido on March 4. Registration starts at 8:30am. The workshop will begin at 9:30am. There is no cost to attend the workshop.

The workshop is made possible through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture–Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Participants will also be introduced to the application of different kinds of mulching, micro irrigation, no-till vegetable production, contour farming, and intercropping of trees and shrubs in a hands-on fashion. Additionally, there will be a taste testing of new sweet potato varieties NMC-CREES is introducing to the CNMI.

For more information about the workshop, call NMC-CREES main office at 234-5498 Ext. 1707. ***(NMC)***

Free training sessions for zoning

The Zoning Office is inviting the public to attend training sessions about the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008. Three of the sessions are geared to specific audiences and one will be for the general public but anyone may attend any session. Each session will start with a briefing and then answer questions.

A reservation is not necessary to attend.

- March 10, Multi-Purpose Building, Susupe
  9am: Signs and banners or retailers and others
  1:30pm: Adult businesses for adult business owners (massage parlors, strip clubs, porno shops, etc.)
- March 12, Multi-Purpose Building, Susupe
  9am: Overview of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 for developers and the general public
  1:30pm: Land subdivision for surveyors and others involved in subdividing property

The Saipan Zoning Law of 2008, permit application forms, and other information are available to download on the Zoning website at www.zoning.gov.mp. Paper copies of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 may also be purchased for $10 at the Zoning Office (2nd Floor, Joeten Dan-Dan Building). ***(PR)***

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees/Workers' Compensation Commission/Group Health & Life Insurance Trust Fund, are hereby giving notice that the Board of Trustees will hold its ***Annual*** meeting on **Friday, February 27, 2009 at 11:00 a.m. at the Rota Municipal Council Office, Songsong Village, Rota.**

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Adoption of Agenda
- D. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting:
  1. January 13, 2009
  2. January 26-28, 2009

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. REPORTS
- A. Report of the Chairman
  1. ROC No. 09-002
- B. Report of the Administrator / Correspondence
  1. ROA No. 09-002
- C. Report of the Comptroller
  1. Financials
     a) NMIRF
     b) GHLITF
     c) WCC
  2. Drawdown Requests
- D. Reports of the Committees
  1. Finance & Investment Committee
  2. Operations & Personnel Committee
     a) OP Committee Report No. 08-006
  3. Policies, Programs & Legislative Review Committee
  4. GH&L and WCC Committee
- E. Reports of the Investment Director
  1. Status of Investment/Market Condition
  2. Report of Housing Loan Program
- F. Communications
  1. Internal Auditor Reports
     a) Double Dipping Audit
- G. Other Matters

IV. LEGAL MATTERS
- A. Reports of the Legal Counsels
  1. Report of the Board Counsel
     a) Lawsuit
     b) Other Legal Matters
  2. Report of the In-house Counsel
     a) Update on Administrative Appeals
  3. Report of the Hearing Officer

V. OLD BUSINESS
1. BR 08-001 Matters
   a) Pension Application Matters
   b) P.L. 15-98
   c) Disability Applicants
2. DC Plan Update Report
3. Rota and Tinian Office Space
   a) Rota Property Matter
4. Pension Software Update
5. Personnel Matters Update
   a) Desk Audits – HR Support, CNMI
6. CGECU Matter
7. Crisis Management Policy – Status Update
8. Request for Exemption – M.A. Sablan
9. MPLT Fee Sharing Proposal
10. Board Resolution – Freeze on Refunds
11. Car Rental Agreement – Status Update
12. Buck Consultants Asset Liability Study – Update (Modeling and Investment Consulting)
13. Building Maintenance RFP – Status Update
14. Organizational Chart - Update

VI. NEW BUSINESS
1. Election of Officers
2. John Rice Presentation
3. Request for Exemption – J.A. Tenorio
4. Request for Exemption – M. Gerbens
5. Request for Exemption – M. Ogo
6. Appeal of J.M. Manglona (NMIRF Case No. 09-002)
7. Appeal of B.C. Santos (NMIRF Case No. 09-003)
8. Appeal of M. Arriola (NMIRF Case No. 09-004)
9. Appeal of D.O. Santos (NMIRF Case No. 09-005)
10. Writ of Execution –F.P. Cabrera
11. Cost Benefit Analysis – Automated Board Meeting Packages
12. Physician Listing Certification – Update
13. IFEBP – Trustees and Administrators Institutes
14. Liability Insurance
15. NMIRF Working Group Update

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS
- A. Announcements
- B. Next Meeting
- C. Adjournment

/s/ JUAN T. GUERRERO
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

WSR Family Fun Night this Friday

William S. Reyes Elementary School will hold its Family Fun Night this Friday, Feb. 27, 6pm to 9pm inside the school's compound.

For more information, call WSR principal Lynette Villagomez at 237-3541. ***(PR)***

Puengin Inetnon on Friday

Puengin Inetnon will be held again on Feb. 27, 2009 at the Kagman Community Center's parking lot. Puengin Inetnon is Kagman's Friday Night Market that will take place every government payday. It will begin at 4:30pm and end at 10pm. There will vendors selling food, drinks, snacks, clothing, and crafts. Puengin Inetnon is a family oriented event. Alcohol will be prohibited from the event. All are welcome. Come attend Puengin Inetnon for some family fun, right here in Kagman. Interested vendors can call 256-POST for applications. Produce and fish vendors are needed by popular demand. ***(PR)***

Kagman Saturday Flea Market

Kagman's Saturday Flea Market will be on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2009, at the Kagman Community Center's parking lot. It will be held every government payday Saturday. You may only sell your used items. Tents will be provided. Interested sellers can call 256-POST for more info. ***(PR)***

UPAA CNMI meeting on Feb. 28

The University of the Philippines Alumni Association-CNMI Chapter will have a meeting on Saturday, Feb. 28, 5:30pm at the Filipino Workers Resource Center, (POLO/OWWA), 1st floor, Marianas Business Plaza (formerly Nauru Bldg.) in Susupe, Saipan . All UPAA officers/members and UP alumni are invited to attend. ***(PR)***

Taotao Tano officers' meeting set

This is to inform all officers of Taotao Tano CNMI Association Inc. that there will be an important meeting this Friday, Feb. 27, at 6:30pm. The agenda include critical public affairs and upcoming events. Call 256-8652 (TOKA) or 788-6764 for details on location. You can also e-mail taotaotanopres@gmail.com for information. ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB09-OHS-053

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 10, 2009 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A DIESEL GENERATOR INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION OF A GENERATOR HOUSE FOR THE CNMI OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY BUILDING #1326, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN"

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A MANDATORY PRE-BID CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED FOR **9:30 A.M., LOCAL TIME, MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2009** AT THE OFFICE OF HOME AND SECURITY BUILDING #1326, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN. **ALL QUESTIONS REGARDING** THIS PROJECT MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR HOMELAND SECURITY OR FAXED TO (670) 664-2218 NO LATER THAN THE **CLOSE OF BUSINESS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2009.**

LOCAL BIDDERS PREFERENCE IS **NOT AVAILABLE** TO LOCAL BIDDERS BECAUSE THE FEDERAL GRANTOR AGENCY, THE U.S. OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY, HAS CERTIFIED THAT SUCH PREFERENCE IS IN CONFLICT WITH THE AGENCY'S GRANT CONDITIONS.

/s/ **PATRICK J. TENORIO**
SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR HOMELAND SECURITY

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-DPS-059

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 19, 2009 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF FOUR (4) POLICE PACKAGE MOTORCYCLES / 2-DPS-POLICE TRAFFIC SECTION - TINIAN & 2-DPS-POLICE TRAFFIC SECTION - ROTA"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **SANTIAGO F. TUDELA**
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-DPS-058

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 19, 2009 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF FOUR (4) POLICE PACKAGE MOTORCYCLES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, POLICE TRAFFICE SECTION - SAIPAN"

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/s/ **SANTIAGO F. TUDELA**
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

February 25, 1999

Rasa welcomes Senate probe

Embattled casino gaming commission consultant Oscar C. Rasa said yesterday he welcomed a Senate committee plan to reopen an oversight investigation into his controversial employment contract, but dared Sen. David M. Cing to relinquish the chairmanship to ensure impartiality of the probe. If the oversight hearing pushes through, this will be the second time that Cing, chairman of the Executive Appointments and Government Investigations, would undertake such Senate inquiry involving the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission. Rasa's $100,000 professional service contract has been drawn anew into a controversy after Tinian Mayor Francisco C. Borja pressed for his ouster on grounds that his employment was improper.

Governor nixes personnel reclassification

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has disapproved a plan that would convert excepted service positions to civil service classified positions under a proposed bill seeking a reorganization of the Commonwealth Ports Authority and the Coastal Resources Management. A Senate proposal intends to repeal an executive order issued by former governor Froilan C. Tenorio which placed CPA and CRM under the Departments of Public Works and Lands and Natural Resources, respectively. These entities used to be autonomous prior to the implementation of the executive order. But a provision that calls for the immediate reinstatement of civil service employees who were converted to excepted service pursuant to the executive order to classified position was opposed by Tenorio because of its impact on civil service regulations.

February 25, 2000

OPA claims evidence vs CUC's Villagomez

The Office of Public Auditor yesterday told a Senate Committee that it has strong evidence to warrant further investigation into bribery allegations against Commonwealth Utilities Corporation executive director Timothy Villagomez. Appearing before the Senate Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations, Public Auditor Leo LaMotte said OPA unearthed sufficient evidence that would justify future inquiry into the bribery accusations leveled against Villagomez regarding the controversial 80 megawatt power plant. "We have clear and sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation of Mr. Villagomez's involvement in the alleged bribery," he told members of the powerful Senate committee.

Oil prices up again

In what appears to be another burden in the driving public's fuel budget, Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc. yesterday implemented another round of increase in prices of petroleum products amid public clamor to roll back the figure to January 2000 levels. The new round of increase in petroleum products is the second in the CNMI in a period of less than 30 days. The company, citing increasing mark-up prices in world market, raised fuel prices by four cents per gallon last Feb. 1, 2000. Mobil gas stations in the Northern Marianas yesterday started selling three major petroleum products at higher prices averaging five cents per gallon.

February 25, 2002

Tinian Dynasty seals charter flight deal

Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino Chair Michael Kwan and China Southern Air signed a contract for a direct charter flight from China to Saipan starting April 19, 2002. In an interview, Kwan disclosed that executives of China Southern Air agreed to start its direct service flights from Guangzhou, China to Saipan when they signed the contract on February 20, 2002. He said China Southern Air will fly to Saipan twice a week using Boeing 757 aircraft, which can seat 198 passengers. China Southern Air is currently applying for a license before the Federal Aviation Administration and the US Department of Transportation.

Warning raised vs butane gas abuse among NMI kids

Sniffing gas, particularly butane, among school-aged children is feared to be compounding the community's string of substance abuse problems, disclosed a group of educators and mental health experts. Authorities have sounded the alarm on what appears to be a growing epidemic of butane gas abuse among school students-a vice believed to be more lethal than tobacco and alcohol consumption. Hop-wood Junior High School Principal David Borja confirmed Friday that the public school first discovered butane gas canisters inside the backpacks of some HJHS students right before the 2001 Christmas break.

LAPD detective reveals details of Miura's arrest

LOS ANGELES (Mainichi Daily News)—Detective Rick Jackson of the Los Angeles Police Department has revealed to the *Mainichi* the events leading to the arrest of the late Kazuyoshi Miura on charges related to a 1981 shooting death.

Miura, who was found not guilty of murder by courts in Japan, was arrested by U.S. authorities on Feb. 22, 2008, when the former import and distribution company president visited the U.S. commonwealth territory of Saipan. Jackson spoke to the *Mainichi* on Feb. 19 this year, days before the anniversary of Miura's capture.

Miura was cleared by the Japanese Supreme Court in 2003. Soon after the L.A. county attorney's office, which had an arrest warrant for Miura, requested his extradition to the United States. The arrest warrant was for murder and conspiracy to commit murder. As the Japanese legal system had found Miura not guilty of murder, and no such crime as conspiracy to commit murder exists in Japan, the Ministry of Justice decided there were no grounds for extraditing him to California.

While this may have ended Miura's troubles on the Japanese side of the Pacific, the Ministry of Justice's refusal did not dampen the determination of the LAPD, and Jackson, to get their man.

At the press conference held just after Miura's 2008 arrest, Jackson said that the case had been activated when the LAPD learned of Miura's trip to Saipan. However, the detective had in fact continued to pursue other avenues to capture Miura since his acquittal in Japan, including apprehending him in foreign countries such as South Korea.

According to Jackson, who had been the sole investigator to be on Miura's case continually since 1988, without any new firearms or DNA evidence forthcoming, he gave "due attention" to the arrest warrant over the years.

When Jackson learned from Miura's blog that he was planning a trip to Saipan, the detective decided that apprehending Miura on U.S. soil was his best option; he would finally be able to bring Miura in. In order to avoid his plans from leaking out, Jackson and the LAPD did not inform Japan of Miura's planned arrest.

"We wanted him to travel, we were hoping he would travel, so we kept very quiet, no one knew," said Jackson of the secrecy surrounding his plans. "We didn't tell Japanese authorities, we kept it within Saipan and the United States."

Miura was arrested during his Saipan vacation in February 2008. His lawyers called for his release, based on his acquittal on the murder charge in the Japanese Supreme Court. However, a Los Angeles County court ruled that the Japanese high court had not ruled on the charge of conspiracy to commit murder, still pending in California, and approved Miura's detention.

Miura committed suicide in his cell in October 2008, on the day he was transferred to Los Angeles.

PDI DONATION

On Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009, D.A.R.E. president Jonas Barcinas accepts a check of $500 generously donated by Pacific Development Inc. Also present are police officers from the DPS Community Oriented Policing Section.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MVA, MTEC ad promotes island hospitality with native greetings

The Marianas Visitors Authority and Marianas Tourism Education Council have launched a new television ad promoting indigenous language greetings as a way to demonstrate island hospitality to visitors.

The 60-second ad, airing on KSPN2 News and The Visitors Channel, features two visiting Japanese learning to master the indigenous greetings of "hafa adai" (Chamorro for hello) and tirow (Carolinian for respect to another).

"Saipan, Tinian and Rota provide a unique opportunity in the world for visitors to experience indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian culture," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "The new ad aims to encourage the use of these indigenous greetings by our island community when welcoming visitors."

The ad was produced by Flame Tree TV and was shot at several locations, including Paseo de Marianas and Fiesta Resort & Spa.

"We're very pleased to partner with MVA on this educational outreach," said MTEC chair Ed Cho. "We encourage everyone to share the island spirit with a visitor with a simple "hafa adai" or "tirow."

MVA and MTEC also acknowledged the support of Flame Tree TV, parent company of KSPN2 and The Visitors Channel, for make a contribution to the airing of the ad. ***(MVA)***

Mariana Islands Range Complex Draft EIS/OEIS Available for Public Comment Jan. 30, 2009 – March 16, 2009

On behalf of the U.S. Defense Representative Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Republic of Palau, the U.S. Navy has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for the Mariana Islands Range Complex. The Draft EIS/OEIS is available for public comment through March 16, 2009.

Where to get the EIS/OEIS: Visit www.MarianasRangeComplexEIS.com to download the document or to find a library that has a copy.

The U.S. Defense Representative Wants Your Input!

The U.S. Defense Representative is hosting open house sessions and public hearings to receive oral or written comments on the Draft EIS/OEIS.

Where to submit comments:

Submit comments via the online form at www.MarianasRangeComplexEIS.com or send written comments via postal mail or e-mail to:

Mariana Islands Range Complex EIS
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Attn: EV2
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134
E-mail: marianas.tap.eis@navy.mil

All comments must be postmarked by March 16, 2009.

Proposed Action

The U.S. Defense Representative proposes to support and conduct current, emerging and future training and research, development, test and evaluation training activities in the Mariana Islands Study Area. Three alternatives are analyzed in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Under the No Action Alternative, military activities would continue at current levels. Alternatives 1 and 2 propose increases in military activity and the number and types of training events, and enhancements to range capabilities. Alternative 2 also proposes new activities related to additional Major Exercises.

Open House Sessions & Public Hearings
Open House: 5 - 9 p.m.
Public Hearing: 7 - 9 p.m.

Guam:
February 19, 2009
Jesus & Eugenia Leon Guerrero School of Business and Public Administration Building
The Anthony Leon Guerrero Multi-Purpose Room 129
University of Guam
Mangilao, Guam 96923

Guam:
February 20, 2009
Southern High School Cafeteria
#1 Jose Perez Leon Guerrero Drive
Santa Rita, Guam 96915

Saipan:
February 23, 2009
Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe

Tinian:
February 24, 2009
Tinian Elementary School Cafeteria
San Jose Village
Tinian, MP 96952

Rota:
February 26, 2009
Sinapolo Elementary School Cafeteria
Sinapolo I

For more information visit **www.MarianasRangeComplexEIS.com**

SHIPPING SCHEDULE

MARIANA EXPRESS LINES PTE. LTD.

Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD P. Kelang	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung	ETD Naha
MELL SENTOSA	016E	2/14 Sat	2/12 Thu	2/12 Thu	2/10 Tue	2/7 Sat	2/20 Fri	2/16 Mon	2/15 Sun	2/8 Sun	2/8 Sun	2/16 Mon	2/20 Fri	2/22 Sun	2/24 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	030E	2/21 Sat	2/19 Thu	2/19 Thu	2/17 Tue	2/14 Sat	2/27 Fri	2/23 Mon	2/22 Sun	2/15 Sun	2/15 Sun	2/23 Mon	2/27 Fri	3/1 Sun	3/3 Tue
MELL SENOKO	018E	2/28 Sat	2/26 Thu	2/26 Thu	2/24 Tue	2/21 Sat	3/6 Fri	3/2 Mon	3/1 Sun	2/22 Sun	2/22 Sun	3/2 Mon	3/6 Fri	3/8 Sun	3/10 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	017E	3/7 Sat	3/5 Thu	3/5 Thu	3/3 Tue	2/28 Sat	3/13 Fri	3/9 Mon	3/8 Sun	3/1 Sun	3/1 Sun	3/9 Mon	3/13 Fri	3/15 Sun	3/17 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	031E	3/14 Sat	3/12 Thu	3/12 Thu	3/10 Tue	3/7 Sat	3/20 Fri	3/16 Mon	3/15 Sun	3/8 Sun	3/8 Sun	3/16 Mon	3/20 Fri	3/22 Sun	3/24 Tue
MELL SENOKO	019E	3/21 Sat	3/19 Thu	3/19 Thu	3/17 Tue	3/14 Sat	3/27 Fri	3/23 Mon	3/22 Sun	3/15 Sun	3/15 Sun	3/23 Mon	3/27 Fri	3/29 Sun	3/31 Tue

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETD Guam	ETA Saipan	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Yokohama	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
MELL SENTOSA	016E	2/28 Sat	3/1 Sun	3/1 Sun	3/3 Tue	3/5 Thu	3/7 Sat	3/8 Sun	3/10 Tue	3/13 Fri	3/14 Sat	3/19 Thu	4/7 Tue	4/5 Sun	3/18 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	030E	3/7 Sat	3/8 Sun	3/8 Sun	SKIP	3/12 Thu	3/14 Sat	3/15 Sun	3/17 Tue	3/20 Fri	3/21 Sat	3/26 Thu	4/14 Tue	4/12 Sun	3/25 Wed
MELL SENOKO	018E	3/14 Sat	3/15 Sun	3/15 Sun	3/17 Tue	3/19 Thu	3/21 Sat	3/22 Sun	3/24 Tue	3/27 Fri	3/28 Sat	4/2 Thu	4/21 Tue	4/19 Sun	4/1 Wed
MELL SENTOSA	017E	3/21 Sat	3/22 Sun	3/22 Sun	SKIP	3/26 Thu	3/28 Sat	3/29 Sun	3/31 Tue	4/3 Fri	4/4 Sat	4/9 Thu	4/28 Tue	4/26 Sun	4/8 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	031E	3/28 Sat	3/29 Sun	3/29 Sun	3/31 Tue	4/2 Thu	4/4 Sat	4/5 Sun	4/7 Tue	4/10 Fri	4/11 Sat	4/16 Thu	5/5 Tue	5/3 Sun	4/15 Wed
MELL SENOKO	019E	4/4 Sat	4/5 Sun	4/5 Sun	SKIP	4/9 Thu	4/11 Sat	4/12 Sun	4/14 Tue	4/17 Fri	4/18 Sat	4/23 Thu	5/12 Tue	5/10 Sun	4/22 Wed

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Saipan MP 96950
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Jaime P. Salazar
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Direct line (670) 236-2410

Joy S. Cause
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Direct line (670) 236-2442

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Moving the world

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Chavez's staying power

Venezuela just took a democratic step closer to dictatorship. On Sunday, President Hugo Chavez won the right to seek re-election ad infinitum, prevailing in a referendum that eliminated term limits for the presidency and other elected offices. Although the balloting was deemed valid by opposition leaders, who have said they will not contest the results, the victory came about because of Chavez's gross misuse of government funds, government workers and federal facilities for the campaign, and neighborhood enforcers to "persuade" voters to support him. He lost a similar vote 14 months ago, but was clearly determined to become president-in-perpetuity and to have Venezuelans vote until they voted his way.

Chavez says the people have chosen to make his Bolivarian Revolution permanent. Maybe. But this was not democracy in action. It was the latest accretion of power by a president who essentially controls the Congress, the Supreme Court and the National Electoral Council, which supervises elections. Campaigning relentlessly, Chavez cast the vote as a referendum not just on term limits but on him personally and on voters' commitment to socialist ideology. It was a tussle between those who love the president for his allegiance to the nation's poor—Chavez warned that his education, health care and business programs for the underprivileged would end with his term in 2013 if he lost—and those who fear him as a power-seeking autocrat. But these are not contradictory views: Chavez is a dictatorial executive, albeit one who gives ordinary Venezuelans a share in the nation's oil wealth—even, some economists believe, at the expense of the country's long-term economic health.

It is important, however, that the U.S. not allow Venezuela's domestic politics to hinder our diplomatic efforts in the region. The Bush administration's mix of incompetence and swagger—its emphasis on useless drug eradication and eschewing of poverty reduction—played into Chavez's hands, allowing him to paint the U.S. as an elitist menace. It is sobering that in supporting Chavez, many Venezuelans also saw themselves as opposing the United States. So, as much as we deplore what looks like the incremental disintegration of democracy in Venezuela, the U.S. must re-engage with Chavez. There are many issues of mutual interest and importance to both countries: trade, immigration, economic development, drug policy and a resolution to the leftist guerrilla conflict across the border in Colombia.

Chavez has joked that he plans to stay in office until 2049. And Sunday's vote shows that in crafting its policy for Latin America, the Obama administration will have to take him seriously.

(c) 2009, Los Angeles Times

WHAT'S THIS... "THE STRAW- AND STICK-HOUSE STABILIZATION AND RELIEF SURCHARGE" ???
TAX BILL
PIG III
FORECLOSURE PLAN
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The truth about Saipan

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT *Creating economic success for the CNMI*

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

If you're like me, a title like "The Truth About [Anything]" is a compelling one that makes you want to read more. I believe we all, on some level, yearn to know the truth. Especially if you've heard contrasting things about life on Saipan, it would be nice, once and for all, to get to the truth of it all, wouldn't it?

The truth is, however, there is no single truth about Saipan. In any attempt to uncover the truth, what we find are subjective perspectives, opinions and observations determined by individual agendas. Some agendas are simple: *(eg. "I want to make everyone as miserable as I am")*. Some agendas are complex. *(eg. "We will organize a federal takeover, reshape it in our image, and make this a military R&R spot for the troops.")*

Even the news media has an agenda. People joke that the media's motto is "Never let the truth get in the way of a good story!" Good (read salacious) stories sell papers, magazines and advertising. Yes, the truth changes based on who is speaking and what they want out of life.

So, whether Saipan is a paradise or a den of corruption is all based on one's agenda. If you are a pessimist who wants people to wallow in your misery, then Saipan is one thing. If you're an optimist, bent on helping improve conditions, it's another. If you call yourself a "realist" (generally a pessimist in disguise), then things generally tend toward the negative with the disclaimer that you're just being real.

But that's all okay, because if you know a person's agenda, then everything they say and do makes sense (unless their agenda is specifically to confuse you about what their agenda is; or unless they're just crazy). And, if you know a person's agenda, then you won't be unduly misled by their claims to truth.

Walt's Agenda

So, with that said, what's MY agenda? As the author of several passionpreneur books, and as evidenced by the title of my weekly column, my agenda is to encourage people to start their own businesses based on their passions. However, I have other agendas as well. One is to help *all* peoples optimize their assets, achieve empowerment, and maintain control over the things that matter to them. Here on Saipan—for my own selfish reasons—I'd like to maintain the cultural diversity, natural beauty, and uncomplicated lifestyle that I've come to love about living here.

But wait, there's more. There's also a part of my agenda that some may consider subversive, and that is to reveal the underlying deception of most modern ideals and belief systems, encourage a lifestyle that values simplicity and minimalism instead of consumerism, and excess, that favors the natural over the artificial, and at the same time honors everyone's right and freedom to choose whichever lifestyle works for them.

My goal is to help people arrive at a set of choices that creates a clean environment, promotes optimal health, safeguards the rights and freedoms of all, and offers an effective understanding of reality.

Every column I write, every website I launch, every project I embark upon includes a combination of some or all of those agendas. But don't be misled. Remember my agenda. It's not my nature to focus on the negative, however "real" the realists say it is. People who harp on doom won't start businesses or see the opportunity in the "doom."

Even my "facts" are selectively offered based on my agenda and what I want you to see. I can strive for a 50-50 balance, but even then, I'll always tend to give at least 51 percent (accentuate the positive, and eliminate the negative, as Bing Crosby sang) to aid the possibility of victory and the triumph of hope.

The Truth About Saipan

So, with that said, here is my truth about Saipan:

■ Saipan is overcoming a branding challenge. In other words, what comes to mind when people think of "Saipan" isn't always what those of us who actually live and work here think are its best assets. We're emerging from the shadow of an era tainted by a controversial garment industry, and other bad (accurate or not) press.

■ Like the rest of the world, there's an economic transition taking place on Saipan. In addition, there are agendas for federalization, immigration and labor reform, which make this an island on the verge.

However, even with these and other changes and challenges, there are a multitude of assets which make this a great place to visit, vacation, live, learn and love!

■ Great Weather: Saipan holds the Guinness World Record for most consistent temperature. The average difference between night and day is greater than the average difference between winter and summer. Those of us who actually live and work here on Saipan enjoy warm tropical weather year round.

■ Natural beauty: There is natural, pristine beauty here in the form of beautiful sunrises, beaches, foliage, fruits, sunsets, rock formations, aquatic life and more!

■ Proximity to Marianas Trench (the deepest part of the world's oceans): While no one actually goes diving that deep, our proximity to such a rich, bio-diverse, unexplored region of the world's oceans has blessed us with underwater life that makes Saipan one of the best places for….

See THE TRUTH on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Educated?

By STEPHEN B. SMITH
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Stephen B. Smith is the Accreditation, Language Arts, and National Forensic League coordinator for the Public School System Central Office.

Recently I had a rather eye opening revelation. A good friend and I were talking, and I discovered a truly remarkable state of affairs: He wasn't educated!

Now mind you, the young man has an AA degree. And he was, in fact, a straight A student, both in college and in high school. But, he wasn't educated. What do I mean by that then? Hearken.

It happened that he was wondering who the picture of the man on the 10 dollar bill was. He didn't know, and I found that mildly surprising, maybe even a tad troubling. Now, one is not likely to be fired from his or her job for not knowing that little bit of trivia, but why would one not know it? Being curious, I asked a few questions of my own.

Who is the current Vice President of the United States? He didn't know. I wasn't worried; maybe he was a Republican. He'd certainly know the answer to the next question.

What's the definition of sine and cosine in math? He was ignorant of those molecules of knowledge too. Okay, so let's try English. Let me have one use of the semicolon when writing. He thought I was referring to part of the gastro-intestinal tract, though he didn't use that terminology. At this point I am about to recommend some serious reading for him.

In science one of the most common terms of the day—seen and heard on TV all of the time—is DNA: to what do the initials in the acronym DNA refer? He thought they were initials for did-not-answer! By now I'm worried. This young man definitely needs to read more. But, I'm not done; I still have hope.

"You play the guitar, right, John?"

"Sure Mr. Smith. I play it good," he said.

"Well," I retorted.

"Well what?" he asked.

"Never mind. Let me ask you, who wrote the Brandenburg concertos?" I said.

"Never read it," he said.

"Can you tell me what century Bach lived in?' I said.

"Back where," he said. Yes, I'm certain of it now. John needs to put up a futon in the library because he ain't gonna be leavin' there for a long time!

Frustrated but tenacious (tenacity is my strongest suit), I plugged on. "John do you know anything about the Civil War?" I said.

"Yeah, Mr. Smith, I do. It's about these married couples and all of their troubles. I saw the last episode; the wife was cheatin' on her husband!" he said. I was speechless and more than a little troubled. I liked this young man, and he wasn't doing well. Yes, absolutely, a futon in the library and a tattoo on his forehead "Reading isn't the most important thing; it's the only thing!"

Gathering myself, I asked him what he had been learning in school to get all of those A's. He told me that he was an expert at video games. He is flashing fast with the game-joystick of his PlayStation. And, he knew what put-and-calls were (look it up): it's when you put all of your game stuff away when your mom calls you for dinner.

Folks we are creating a generation of technicians, and we've got to stop it. It's time we took a good look at liberal arts education and begin force feeding it to our young people. It is not enough to be able to turn on a computer and manipulate a joystick with gunfighter speed and ferocity. To be truly educated one actually needs to know something and be able to think at a critical level. It's part of being civilized, for goodness sakes!

Letter to the Editor

Local economy and land alienation

I would like o present my personal views on the rhetoric "Economy and Land Alienation." I am referencing the Feb. 17, 2009, *Marianas Variety* headline "Ex-chief justice: NMI on verge of bankruptcy." The ex-chief justice, Mr. Jose Dela Cruz said, "…the CNMI will soon be bankrupt unless the government changes the land alienation rule, which discourages potential investors from infusing fresh capital into the islands' ailing tourism-based economy."

I beg to defer with Mr. Dela Cruz's argument that the CNMI's land alienation law is one of the major factors in the CNMI government's financial dilemma. Realistically, it is the doing of our elected officials' insatiability, power play, and buddy-buddy approach that has brought the CNMI to this financial predicament. It is the elected officials' famous hidden attitude we call in Chamorro "Guahu Finetnina." We should be mindful that during the boom times of the late '80s and early '90s, the land alienation law has already been embedded in the CNMI Constitution. Investors flocked to the CNMI with positive investment attitude. They built hotels and other business. They were not discouraged by Article 12.

In my opinion, the driving factors that might cause the CNMI government to go bankrupt are:

1. Fact, the CNMI economy is tourism based. Japan Airlines pulled out from the CNMI in the mid-2000. Continental Airline followed suit last year. And Northwest Airlines is cutting back in March 2009. These tourism drivers are the major cause of the NMI government's financial dilemma. Fewer tourists to the CNMI will mean lesser funds for the CNMI government.

2. Fact, the exodus of over $80 million by way of taxes from the garment factories will definitely have immense negative financial impact on the local government.

3. Fact, private and public entities have to embrace sustainability in these hard economic times. To stay afloat they have to cut corners that greatly affect employees. Taking away consumers' buying power will mean fewer taxes to the government from businesses.

4. Fact, the high cost of fuel will have negative impact on the government's finances.

5. Fact, the depressed local economy is driven by the global economy. There is nothing we can do to revive our economy unless the world economy is resolved. Foreign investors will only react positively to the economy when, and only when, the world economic situation is resolved. The CNMI government will continue to financially suffer.

To blame land alienation as the cause of a bankrupt CNMI government is pure fallacy.

It is my personal view that the above five reasons will cause the CNMI government to go bankrupt and not land alienation. And, of course, there is the Homeland Security issue to consider about potential investors from China and Korea and other countries. Homeland Security is beyond our control.

On the other hand, I must admit that I strongly agree with Mr. Dela Cruz that we should reconsider our flexibility in terms of land leases. But his suggestion of extending land leases from 40 years for public land and 55 years for private land to 75 to 99 years is not the answer. The concept is the same as lifting the land alienation law. I would recommend that flexibility of lease term should be and must be empowered to land owners. Landowners should make the decision to lease back completed years of the lease terms that have expired. Economically, extending leases to 75 to 99 years is not acceptable. Investors and landowners must continue to economically prosper.

The current 55-year land lease provision should continue to stay. The land lease flexibility should remain with the landowners. The government should not be making decisions for the landowners. If landowners want to lease back the completed lease term, then let them make that decision.

Lastly, we must embrace the land alienation rule, Article 12, of our Constitution. We must not compromise our land over money. Money is not our future, land is!

Isidro Kani
As Matuis, Saipan

THE TRUTH

From Page 10

■ World class diving: World class shore diving, "Eagle Ray City," and the Grotto are just some of the activities and locations those who dive our waters rave about.

■ Discovery of ecological significance: Scientists and students of ecology can learn much about life on our planet from our coral reefs (estimated value comparable to Hawaii), and the pristine, biodiversity of our waters. The U.S. government recently created the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument (an area of over 12,000 square nautical miles) in recognition of this significance.

■ Cultural diversity: Life on Saipan has been influenced by the Spanish, Germans, Japanese, and Americans! The indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian people, immigrants, guest workers, tourists, investors and students from Asia, the Pacific, and America, make this a place of unprecedented cultural/ethnic potential.

■ Historical significance: Without needing to glorify war and violence, it stands as fact that Saipan was a key battle site during World War II. It's been said the Cold War started on Tinian, the island just 3 miles south of Saipan! That's where the atomic bombs dropped on Japan were launched!

■ Archeological significance: Ancient artifacts of some of the planet's earliest civilizations are found here.

■ Unsolved mysteries: The case could be made that there are stories waiting to be told about the Amelia Earhart mystery, sunken Spanish treasure ships, World War II disappearances, ancient civilizations in which Saipan figures prominently. What might you discover on your own?

And that's just some of the truth about Saipan. (Don't forget my agenda). Despite its challenges, many who come, stay. Many who leave miss it terribly. And many who travel the world over come back to enjoy a way of life they can't find anywhere else. Those of us who actually live and work on Saipan know this to be truth.

'Come See For Yourself!'

Ultimately, the only way to discover the truth about Saipan is to come see for yourself! But it would be wise to heed the moral of this story:

Once upon a time, a person moved into a new town and asked one of the town residents, "What are the people in this town like?"

"What were the people like in the town you just left?" The resident asked back.

The new person answered, "They were unfriendly and nasty."

And the town resident said, "I think you'll find the people here are just about the same."

Later, the same resident was approached by another new arrival, who asked the same question. Again, the resident asked, "What were the people like in the town you just left?"

The answer was "The people were warm and friendly." And the resident answered, "I think you'll find the people here are just about the same."

Saipan Living Invitation

As founder of SaipanLiving.com, I receive questions and inquiries every day from people who are considering moving to Saipan to live, work, start businesses, rent property, escape the rat race, or simply live a different lifestyle. If you'd like to share your truth with them, as the content on the site is being developed, please visit www.saipanliving.com and/or email me to become an expert and answer their questions. I encourage you to participate, otherwise their perception of Saipan will be "the world according to Walt," (and who wants a bunch of subversive, minimalist, Jamaican, vegan idealists running around island?)

P.S. On the site, you'll also discover some interesting truths about the little-known *Touwalawas* people of Saipan! I think you'll find them interesting.

Note: After last week's Save Saipan column, I was contacted by Jeaniffer Hiponia who created a Facebook group called "Being the Change that Saipan Needs." Find it on Facebook and let's all join her movement, too!

■ ■ ■

Visa waiver comments:

Do you have a concern about the pending Visa Waiver law? Make your voice heard! Please note that public comments must be submitted by March 17, 2009. You must reference Docket *#: USCBP-2009-0001 in your letters.* Send letters to:

Border Security Regulations
Branch, Office of International Trade,
Customs and Border Protection, Mint Annex,
799 9th Street, NW.,
Washington, DC 20001.

Also, submit your comments and concerns online at:
www.change.gov, www.whitehouse.gov, www.regulations.gov, and www. dhs.gov. The more the better.

■ ■ ■

***Note**: For more tips on overcoming your fears, acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!*

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. *Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com*

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

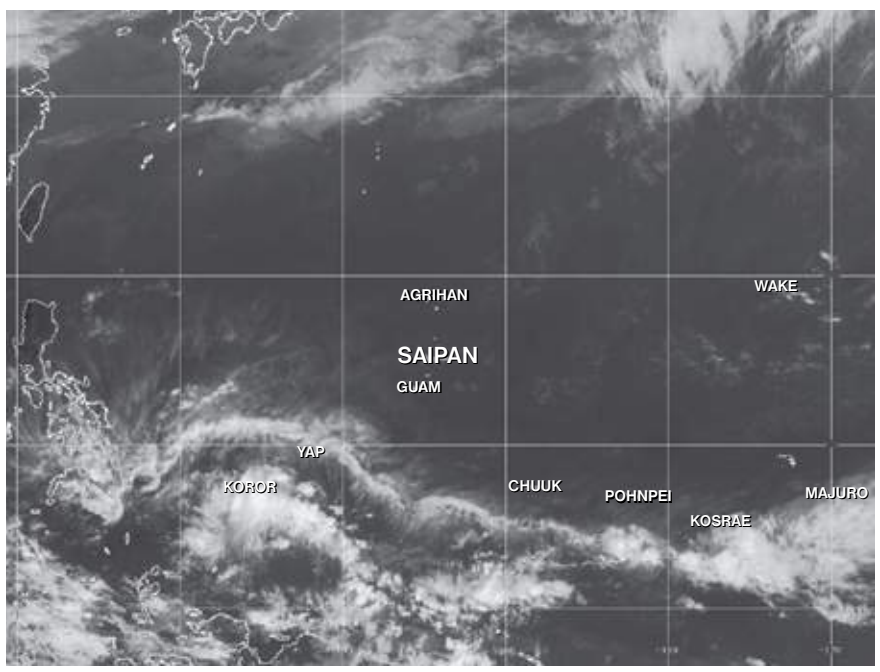
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲84	▼75
Palau	Showers	▲87	▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼79
Pohnpei	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼75
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲80	▼78

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲69	▼59
Beijing	Cloudy	▲41	▼27
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲81	▼70
Honolulu	Showers	▲75	▼66
London	Cloudy	▲50	▼41
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲66	▼52
Manila	Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲75	▼58
Miami	Cloudy	▲77	▼62
New York	Cloudy	▲39	▼33
Osaka	Rain	▲52	▼41
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲50	▼38
Pusan	Rain	▲55	▼43
Rome	Sunny	▲51	▼29
Salem	Rain	▲51	▼38
San Francisco	Showers	▲60	▼51
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲44	▼30
Tokyo	Showers	▲54	▼38
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲50	▼36

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, FEB. 24, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough runs from 1N130E to a weak circulation near 3N136E to EQ140E. Convergent low-level winds north and east of the trough axis are generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within 90 miles of a line from 4N132E to 6N134E to 6N136E to 1N144E to 1N154E. This activity includes Koror Palau but lies well south of Yap and Chuuk. Trade-wind convergence is creating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms within 100 miles of a line from 5N156E to 3N166E to 9N180. The northern edge of these showers just reaches Majuro and is just south of Kosrae.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
2:01 AM Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet
8:29 AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
2:24 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
7:47 PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:37 AM	6:24 PM
Thursday	6:36 AM	6:24 PM
Friday	6:36 AM	6:24 PM
Saturday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Sunday	6:34 AM	6:25 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:27 AM	6:32 PM
Thursday	7:03 AM	7:22 PM
Friday	7:40 AM	8:13 PM
Saturday	8:18 AM	9:06 PM
Sunday	8:59 AM	10:02 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am	Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily
Guam-Narita			
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm	Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am	1,4,6
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Guam-Osaka			
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am	Daily
Guam-Nagoya			
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Incheon			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am	1,4,6 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Shanghai			
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6
Rota-Guam			
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7
Guam-Palau			
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm	1,7
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3,5
Palau-Manila			
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3,5
Guam-Manila			
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm	Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm	Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm	Daily
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm	5,7
Narita-Manila			
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm	Daily

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Narita-Guam			
NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm	Daily
NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm	Daily
Osaka-Saipan			
OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7
NW 084	10:40am	3:05pm	Daily
Osaka-Guam			
NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1	Daily
Nagoya-Guam			
NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
Incheon-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Palau-Guam			
CO 954	2:30am	5:25am	1,2
CO 892	2:35am	5:30am	4,6
Manila-Palau			
CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3,5
Manila-Guam			
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Manila-Nagoya			
NW 72	6:30am	11:05am	Daily
Hongkong-Incheon			
OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am	Daily
OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am	1,4,6
OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm	Daily
Manila-Narita			
NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm	Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

A 'reset' that doesn't compute

By JACKSON DIEHL
(c) 2009, The Washington Post

Diehl is deputy editorial page editor for The Washington Post.

MOSCOW—Normally sour Russian officials are almost jaunty in describing their first engagements with the Obama administration. "We are excited," says one at the Foreign Ministry.

It's not just Vice President Biden's recent promise of a "reset" in U.S.-Russian relations that prompts this outward cheer from the government of Vladimir Putin. A first visit by a senior U.S. delegation here a week and a half ago quickly produced agreement on an agenda that begins with a new nuclear arms control treaty to replace the START agreement, which expires at the end of the year. There is discussion of re-creating bilateral cooperation committees, and of U.S. support for Russian membership in the World Trade Organization. And the Russians are thrilled by what they perceive to be Obama's incipient retreat from Bush administration agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic to begin building a European missile defense.

So is this the beginning of a new era of cooperation between Washington and Moscow—a detente that could deliver another big cut in nuclear arsenals, more effective pressure on Iran's nuclear program, and a diminishment of the growing tensions between the United States and Europe over how to handle Russia? A few days spent here with a group of Americans and Germans organized by the German Marshall Fund left me with some considerable doubts.

The first concerns the Russian economy—the basis of Russians' acceptance of Putin's autocracy—which has plummeted far faster and further than any in the developed West. This year will see, at best, a massive reversal in Russian output, from the 8 percent growth rate of 2008 to a 2 percent contraction. Industrial production in January dropped 16 percent, and unemployment rose to more than 8 percent. Independent economists predict that the jobless rate will rise as high as 15 percent and that the government's once-vast reserve of dollars will be exhausted sometime next year.

This city remains a showcase of bright lights and choking traffic, but outside the capital popular demonstrations and strikes have begun. With Kremlin funding drying up, regional governments are showing signs of rebelliousness. And in Moscow itself there are hints of an ugly debate among the competing political clans around Putin over how to divide what money is left.

These are all familiar symptoms of the political and economic "chaos" of the Russian 1990s, the rescue from which has been the foundation of Putin's domestic popularity. Little surprise then, to hear a seasoned foreign businessman here agree with the almost universal assessment by Moscow's small democratic opposition movement: "Putinism as it has existed until now is dead." Former chess champion-turned-dissident Garry Kasparov said, "The situation will inevitably lead to political change. What kind of change? I don't know."

To that uncertainty must be added Putin's unaltered domestic political formula: harsh repression of critics such as Kasparov, the unsolved murders of leading journalists and human rights activists, and relentless television propaganda that describes Russia as a great power encircled by enemies—foremost among them the United States. "Of course the authorities understand that they need good relations with America now," said Arsenii Roginski of the human rights group Memorial, whose main office, in St. Petersburg, was recently ransacked by security forces. "But also the authorities understand that the population should be told who is the enemy, and why you don't live well—and that is America. And this is the contradiction."

Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, a longtime student of Russia, liked to point out that, historically, deepening Russian domestic repression has correlated with greater external belligerence. Will this era be an exception? The Obama administration and European governments seem to hope so; the latest Moscow political murders have not slowed their rush to "reset."

Yet the cheery Russian response has covered a series of policy moves that are, at best, ambiguous.

Despite its dire budget problems, Putin's government offered $2.1 billion in aid this month to the government of Kyrgyzstan, which promptly announced the closure of a U.S. air base vital to operations in Afghanistan. Russian officials then smilingly offered a supply corridor to Afghanistan through Russia, providing Putin with a potential chokehold over NATO operations. Officials here were blunt in describing their objective: to be treated as an equal partner by Washington in deciding Afghanistan's future.

Then there are the disturbing signs that Putin's ambition to subjugate Georgia—manifest in the hysterical rhetoric with which officials here continue to describe its democratic and pro-Western government—remains very much alive. Pavel Felgenhauer, a respected military reporter for the independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta, offers a detailed case for his conclusion that the possibility of a Russian military operation this summer to "finish the job" of toppling Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili is "frighteningly high."

Naturally, those betting on a new spring in U.S.-Russian relations scoff at such speculation. But Felgenhauer is used to that. He was also dismissed last year—when he correctly predicted that a Russian invasion of Georgia would come by August.

China and the Internet

By JOHN POMFRET
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Is the Internet actually helping to keep the Chinese Communist Party in power? That's the question that Rebecca MacKinnon, former CNN correspondent, now of the University of Hong Kong, asked last week during a talk at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

A while back, enthusiasts in the West predicted that the hurly-burly of the Internet would snuff out authoritarian regimes. China was Exhibit A. But that hasn't happened.

For one, MacKinnon said, the Internet bolsters Communist Party rule because it allows people to blow off steam. Online censorship is actually quite spotty, so Chinese netizens have plenty of space to mock the regime. MacKinnon flashed a Photoshopped image of a naked man doing push-ups on the Great Wall and an Alvin and the Chipmunks-style video of masticating alpacas as examples of hard-hitting political humor. (Trust me, in Chinese, they're a bellyful of laughs.)

MacKinnon argued that the Internet has also forced the government to be more responsive to citizen complaints. Last November, for example, a party official was fired after a security videotape that caught him fondling an 11-year-old girl in a restaurant surfaced on the Web. The result: People are still ticked off, but not enough to make a revolution.

And finally, MacKinnon noted, surfing the Web is an efficient way for China's cops to snoop on dissidents and other malcontents. Cyber-tarianism anyone?

Pomfret is author of Chinese Lessons.

Political mischief

Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider, a Republican Party candidate for governor in the upcoming election, issued the following statement yesterday, categorically denying making the statement attributed in him in a *Saipan Tribune* article on Feb. 24, 2009:

"I wrote a letter to the Northern Marianas College as a member of the Legislature conveying my concern over very serious issues still pending at the college, but I made no statement about the qualifications any specific employee at the college. I regret the malicious nature of those additional statements, and this is a campaign season, and so my actions are going to be open to a great deal of political mischief, but those particular statements should not be attributed to me. I did not make them. It is clear, however, that others have no trouble diverting attention from what are legitimate issues at the college, prepared even to throw certain individuals under the bus. I am hopeful that the general public will not be distracted by this kind of mischief and will focus instead on the hard work that lies ahead, specifically, what we all need to do to make this place better for everyone in our community.

Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider
Capital Hill, Saipan

Editor's Note: The Saipan Tribune *stands by its story.*

Small business focused

Throughout the past few weeks of confusion and uncertainty, the White House and Congress have discussed and debated all manner of solutions and ideas, be it through the stimulus bill or any number of other federal initiatives. However, do any of the plans relieve or rescue a core group of American businesses? Will real job creation be possible without salvaging small businesses? So far, this group has been overlooked and underrepresented before policy-makers and the administration. With all this discussion, small business has had little input and even less of a voice as leaders attempt to solve the current economic crisis.

In 2004, the most recent year for which firm-size data are available, small businesses with fewer than 500 employees accounted for nearly all net new jobs. Small firms had a net gain of 1.86 million new jobs, while large firms with 500 or more employees had a net loss of 181,000 jobs. Small firms employed 50.9 percent of the private-sector work force and generated 50.7 percent of the nonfarm private gross domestic product. With small businesses having a major impact on the overall economy, where is the plan to keep the endangered small businesses afloat?

President Obama's nationwide address Monday night adeptly pointed out the types of growth needed to restart the American economy. The No. 1 point he emphasized was job creation and job security - without which, according to the president, the existing recession would turn it into a full-blown economic catastrophe. What is less clear from the plan he espouses is exactly how and to whom the stimulus funds will be distributed and the initiatives will be directed. Given the statistics delineated above, the president should ensure proper allocation of his energy and attention to sustain and grow American small businesses—the backbone of job creation and retention and of our overall economic success.

Rudy Pamintuan
Chicago

Letter of apology

Dear CUC: I am writing this letter to sincerely apologize for what I have done. To commit a big mistake like this to a company is knowing that a lot of people went through a lot of pain and suffering for what I have done. I will serve time for the mistake I have made, and I hope the time I will serve will make me realize that the things I have done is really wrong. I understand that the things that I have done brought nothing but shame to me and my family. I want to move on with my life and start all over again. Once again, I apologize to CUC and to the public and I promise that this mistake will not repeat itself. Thank you for your time and understanding.

Joaquin E. Norita
Garapan, Saipan

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Appearing for Petitioner
ABRAHAMA AMIREZ

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE ESTATE OF **SILVERIO M. AMIREZ a.k.a. SYLVERIO M. AMIRES and SILVERIO AMIRES,** Deceased.	Civil Action No. 09-0055 **NOTICE OF HEARING**

TO: **INTERESTED CLAIMANTS AND CREDITORS:**

Notice is hereby given that ABRAHAMA AMIREZ, of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, has filed a petition in the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to be appointed as Administrator of the Estate of Silverio M. Amirez, deceased, and to determine the heirs of the decedent. The Attorney of record is Danilo T. Aguilar, Esq., P.O. Box 505301, Saipan, MP 96950. The hearing on the petition is set for March 31, 2009, at the Superior Court in Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, at 1:30 p.m. All interested persons should appear at this hearing.

All persons having any claims against the estate, or against the deceased should file their claims with the Clerk of Court of the Superior Court within sixty (60) days after the first publication of this notice.

Dated this 13th day of February, 2009.

Bernardita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

By: /s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

DANILO T. AGUILAR, F0198
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Attorney for Petitioner
JESSELO UNABIA

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

JESSELO UNABIA, Plaintiff, v. **LUVIMIN A. UNABIA,** Respondent.	FCD-DI Civil Action No. 09-0073 **ORDER TO APPEAR OR PLEAD (7 CMC § 1301)**

TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANT:
LUVIMIN A. UNABIA

PURSUANT TO 7 CMC § 1301, YOU ARE HEREBY ORDERED to make your appearance or file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint filed with the Commonwealth Superior Court, within 30 days from the service date. You are instructed to make your appearance before the Clerk of Courts or mail a copy of your answer to the Complaint to the Law Office of Danilo T. Aguilar, whose address is P.O. Box 505301, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing. You may obtain a copy of the Complaint by contacting Petitioner's counsel of record.

If you choose to file an answer, your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of Court at the Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of the Court by messenger or mail.

If you fail to make your appearance or file an answer in accordance with this Order To Appear or Plead, a default judgment will be entered against you for the relief of the Complaint.

A copy of this Order is to be published at a newspaper of general circulation, once a week for two consecutive weeks. In addition, a copy of this Order shall be posted in two (2) conspicuous places for a period of not less than two weeks.

SO ORDERED.

/s/ KENNETH L. GOVENDO
Associate Judge

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FAX: (670) 234-1251

Attorney for Petitioner
MA. CRISTINA L. SARMIENTO

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

MA. CRISTINA L. SARMIENTO, Plaintiff, v. **ROD NOEL A. SARMIENTO,** Respondent.	FCD-DI Civil Action No. 09-0074 **ORDER TO APPEAR OR PLEAD (7 CMC § 1301)**

TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANT:
ROD NOEL A. SARMIENTO

PURSUANT TO 7 CMC § 1301, YOU ARE HEREBY ORDERED to make your appearance or file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint filed with the Commonwealth Superior Court, within 30 days from the service date. You are instructed to make your appearance before the Clerk of Courts or mail a copy of your answer to the Complaint to the Law Office of Danilo T. Aguilar, whose address is P.O. Box 505301, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing. You may obtain a copy of the Complaint by contacting Petitioner's counsel of record.

If you choose to file an answer, your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of Court at the Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of the Court by messenger or mail,

If you fail to make your appearance or file an answer in accordance with this Order To Appear or Plead, a default judgment will be entered against you for the relief of the Complaint.

A copy of this Order is to be published at a newspaper of general circulation, once a week for two consecutive weeks. In addition, a copy of this Order shall be posted in two (2) conspicuous places for a period of not less than two weeks.

SO ORDERED.

/s/ KENNETH L. GOVENDO
Associate Judge

Business

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA
3,285.00
Down 19.10
(-0.58%)

HONG KONG
12,805.84
Down 369.29
(-2.80%)

JAKARTA
1,296.97
Down 15.47
(-1.18%)

TOKYO
7,268.56
Down 107.60
(-1.46%)

K. LUMPUR
888.65
Up 0.82
(+0.09%)

MANILA
1,869.59
Down 21.45
(-1.13%)

SINGAPORE
1,606.83
Down 23.86
(-1.46%)

SEOUL
1,019.83
Down 37.26
(-3.52%)

BANGKOK
429.07
Down 5.92
(-1.36%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
7,114.78
-250.89

S&P
743.33
-26.72

NASDAQ
1,387.72
-53.51

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.5522
British Pound	0.6903
Canadian Dollar	1.2503
Chinese Yuan	6.8433
Euro	0.7866
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7530
Indian Rupee	49.8850
Indonesian Rupiah	11,995.0000
Japanese Yen	95.1450
Malaysian Ringgit	3.6686
New Zealand Dollar	1.9571
Philippine Peso	48.2450
Singapore Dollar	1.5298
South Korean Won	1,495.7000
Swiss Franc	1.1683
Taiwan Dollar	34.7165
Thailand Baht	35.7400

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Feds explore taking bigger stakes in shaky banks

WASHINGTON (AP)—The government on Monday moved toward dramatically expanding its ownership stakes in the nation's banks—with Citigroup, the struggling titan of the industry, apparently at the top of the list.

Wall Street responded as it has with the rollout of almost every other plan to fix the financial crisis, taking a big drop and sending the Dow Jones industrials to its lowest level in a dozen years.

The Treasury Department, the Federal Reserve and other banking regulators said they could convert the government's stock in the banks from preferred shares to common shares.

The strategy, which could be applied retroactively to banks that received money in the first incarnation of the bailout, carries risks. But it avoids, at least for now, having to tap more taxpayer money or resort to full-fledged nationalization.

Citigroup—perhaps the biggest name in American banking—has approached the regulators about ways the government could help strengthen the bank, including the stock conversion plan, according to people familiar with the discussions. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak on behalf of the government or the company. A Citigroup spokesman declined comment.

AP

Citigroup Center is seen in New York, Monday, Feb. 23, 2009.

The stock conversion could be available for other banks as well, the same sources said.

Regulators, reinforcing what the White House has said, insisted that keeping banks private is a priority. But federal officials are walking a difficult line because the government could still have huge stakes in banks.

Citigroup already has received $45 billion in bailout money, plus guarantees to cover losses on hundreds of billions of dollars in risky investments.

"What we are doing here is we're creeping our way toward nationalization," said Terry Connelly, dean of Golden Gate University's Ageno School of Business.

The conversion plan would give the government greater flexibility in dealing with ailing banks. It would give the government voting shares, and therefore more say in a bank's operations.

But common shares absorb losses before preferred shares do, which means taxpayers would be on the hook if banks keep writing down billions of dollars' worth of rotten assets, such as dodgy mortgages, as many analysts expect they will.

On the other hand, common stock in banks is incredibly cheap, and taxpayers would reap gains if the banks come back to health and the stock price goes up.

Citigroup stock rose about 10 percent Monday, its first gain in eight days. The bank has posted five straight quarterly losses, including $8.3 billion in the fourth quarter. It is working to cut expenses, sell assets and return to a profit.

Major stock market indexes fall to 1997 levels

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street has turned the clock back to 1997. Investors unable to extinguish their worries about a recession that has no end in sight dumped stocks again Monday. The Dow Jones industrial average tumbled 251 points to its lowest close since Oct. 28, 1997, while the Standard & Poor's 500 index logged its lowest finish since April 11, 1997.

All the major indexes slid more than 3 percent. The Dow is just over 100 points from 7,000.

"People left and right are throwing in the towel," said Keith Springer, president of Capital Financial Advisory Services.

Investors pounded most financial stocks even as government agencies led by the Treasury Department said they would launch a revamped bank rescue program this week. The plan includes the option of increasing government ownership in financial institutions without having to pour more taxpayer money into them.

Although the government has said it doesn't want to nationalize banks, many investors are clearly still concerned that this could be a possibility as banks continue to suffer severe losses because of the recession. They're also worried that banks' losses will keep escalating as the recession sends more borrowers into default.

"The biggest thing I see here is the incredible pessimism," Springer said. "The government is doing a lousy job of alleviating fears."

The Treasury and other agencies issued a statement after The Wall Street Journal reported that Citigroup is in talks for the government to boost its stake in the bank to as much as 40 percent. Analysts said the market, which initially rose on the statement, wanted more details of the government's plans.

COO Peter Chernin to depart News Corp. in June

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Peter Chernin, president and chief operating officer of News Corp., will step down when his contract expires June 30, the company said Monday.

Chermin

The vacancy likely clears the eventual path to succession for Chief Executive Rupert Murdoch's son James, the 36-year-old executive in charge of News Corp.'s businesses in Europe and Asia. The elder Murdoch, 77, controls more than a third of the media conglomerate's shares and that control will be passed on to his four eldest children in a family trust in time.

But the departure comes at an awkward time for News Corp., which has seen its stock price fall 68 percent, or more than $13, over the past 12 months to close Monday at $6.39, as a slump in advertising spending pressures its newspapers and television networks. It also booked a $6.4 billion loss in its most recent quarter because of a massive write-down in the value of its assets.

The company said in a statement Monday that its 20th Century Fox movie studio and Fox broadcast and network business will report directly to Murdoch upon Chernin's departure.

Chernin, 57, said next week marks his 20th anniversary with the company, adding in a statement "this was a difficult decision for me," and calling Murdoch a "visionary."

Asia markets fall amid relentless financial fears

HONG KONG (AP)—Asian stock markets tumbled Tuesday, with Hong Kong's index down nearly 4 percent, after relentless fears about the financial system and world economy drove Wall Street to its worst finish in more than a decade.

Every major market shuddered from losses across a range of sectors, from banks to technology firms, exporters and commodities, wiping out solid gains from the previous day.

Tokyo's benchmark languished near a 26-year low as news that Nomura Holdings, Japan's biggest broker, will raise billions more in capital by selling shares added to worries about the financial sector.

Most Asian bourses advanced strongly Monday on reports the U.S. government may take a greater stake in tottering financial giant Citigroup.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Ticketmaster settles with NJ, faces Tues. hearings

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—Ticketmaster has agreed to change its online sales process after it directed people seeking Bruce Springsteen tickets to a subsidiary that charged up to 50 times the face value. Ticketmaster reached a settlement with New Jersey, but the changes apply to all its sales nationwide, state Attorney General Anne Milgram said Monday. The settlement comes as Ticketmaster Entertainment Inc. faces scrutiny for a proposed merger with the concert promotion giant Live Nation Inc. The merger will be the subject of congressional hearings Tuesday in Washington. Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., has said he thinks the merger would violate antitrust rules by giving Ticketmaster a near-monopoly on the concert ticket market. Schumer said Monday that he welcomed the New Jersey settlement.

Judge orders Thain to testify on Merrill bonuses

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—A New York judge cleared the way Monday for former Merrill Lynch & Co. CEO John Thain to testify about bonuses paid to Merrill employees before the company was sold to Bank of America Corp. New York's Attorney General Andrew Cuomo filed a motion in the state's Supreme Court Monday asking that Thain be compelled to provide details on the bonuses, which he had declined to give during a deposition Thursday. Thain's attorney Andrew Levander later Monday said that the motion was granted and Thain will answer the questions Tuesday. Levander said Thain has been cooperating with the investigation. "He's answered 97 percent of the questions asked, and the only ones he didn't answer were at the request of Bank of America," Levander told the Associated Press.

UAW reaches health care trust fund deal with Ford

DETROIT (AP)—The United Auto Workers and Ford Motor Co. said Monday they agreed to let the automaker change how it pays for a health care trust fund for retired workers, a deal that could serve as the model for cash-starved General Motors Corp. and Chrysler LLC. Ford said the agreement allows it to make payments to the union-managed trust with up to 50 percent of company stock instead of cash. Having the UAW take equity frees up cash for operations. "We will consider each payment when it is due and use our discretion in determining whether cash or stock makes sense at the time, balancing our liquidity needs and preserving shareholder value," said Ford spokesman Mark Truby in a written statement.

Nation

Obama pledges to slash deficit—after increase

WASHINGTON (AP)—Urging strict future restraint even as current spending soars, President Barack Obama pledged on Monday to dramatically slash the skyrocketing annual budget deficit as he started to dole out the record $787 billion economic stimulus package he signed last week.

"If we confront this crisis without also confronting the deficits that helped cause it, we risk sinking into another crisis down the road," the president warned, promising to cut the yearly deficit in half by the end of his four-year term. "We cannot simply spend as we please and defer the consequences."

He said he would reinstitute a pay-as-you-go rule that calls for spending reductions to match increases and would shun what he said were the past few years' "casual dishonesty of hiding irresponsible spending with clever accounting tricks." He called the long-term solvency of Social Security "the single most pressing fiscal challenge we face by far" and said reforming health care, including burgeoning entitlement programs, was a huge priority.

Wall Street seemed unimpressed by all the talk. The Dow Jones industrials dropped 251 points for the day.

Obama goes before Congress and the nation Tuesday night to make the case for his agenda and his budget plans, which the White House is to release in more detail on Thursday.

On Monday, he sought to prepare people for tough choices ahead.

AP

President Barack Obama points as he takes questions to close the Fiscal Responsibility Summit, Monday, Feb. 23, 2009 in the Old Executive Office Building at the White House in Washington.

He summoned allies, adversaries and outside experts to what the White House characterized as a summit on the nation's future financial health one week after triumphantly putting his signature on the gargantuan spending-and-tax-cut measure designed to stop the country's economic free fall and, ultimately, reverse the recession now months into its second year.

At the same time, federal regulators announced a revamped program to shore up the nation's banks that could give the government increasing ownership. It was the administration's latest attempt to bolster the severely weakened banking system without nationalizing any institutions, which the White House has said it does not intend to do.

McCain questions Obama about helicopter at summit

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama never had a helicopter, which he says might explain why he's perfectly happy with the current White House fleet and doesn't need a more costly one. At the conclusion of a fiscal summit Monday, Obama faced questions from Republican and Democratic lawmakers, including his former presidential rival, Sen. John McCain.

McCain bemoaned cost overruns in military procurement. The new fleet of 28 Marine One helicopters being built by Lockheed Martin Corp.—now over budget at $11.2 billion—will cost more than Air Force One.

Obama said the helicopter he has now seems adequate, adding that he never had a helicopter before and "maybe I've been deprived and I didn't know it."

Obama said he has already talked to Defense Secretary Robert Gates about reviewing the program and its ballooning costs.

"It is an example of the procurement process gone amok, and we're going to have to fix it," Obama said.

The Navy—which is in charge of overseeing the helicopter program—reported to Congress in January that its price tag had nearly doubled. That notification triggered a formal process mandating the program be re-certified as a national security requirement by senior Pentagon leadership.

The Navy waited nearly a year before formally disclosing the information to lawmakers as it sought to find ways to keep the program within budget. Those efforts failed.

Gates already has warned of tough cuts in the upcoming fiscal 2010 budget as the Pentagon faces the pressure of paying for two wars during a recession.

Lockheed Martin spokesman Troy Scully said in a statement, "We are committed to the program's success and are confident we can deliver the required number of helicopters compliant with the specifications that emerge from the ongoing review."

House Democrats propose $410 billion spending bill

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Democrats unveiled a $410 billion spending bill on Monday to keep the government running through the end of the fiscal year, setting up the second political struggle over federal funds in less than a month with Republicans.

The measure includes thousands of earmarks, the pet projects favored by lawmakers but often criticized by the public in opinion polls. There was no official total of the bill's earmarks, which accounted for at least $3.8 billion.

The legislation, which includes an increase of roughly 8 percent over spending in the last fiscal year, is expected to clear the House later in the week.

Democrats defended the spending increases, saying they were needed to make up for cuts enacted in recent years or proposed a year ago by then-President George W. Bush in health, education, energy and other programs.

Republicans countered that the spending in the bill far outpaced inflation, and amounted to much higher increases when combined with spending in the stimulus legislation that President Barack Obama signed last week. In a letter to top Democratic leaders, the GOP leadership called for a spending freeze, a step they said would point toward a "new standard of fiscal discipline."

Either way, the bill advanced less than one week after Obama signed the $787 billion economic stimulus bill that all Republicans in Congress opposed except for three moderate GOP senators.

Apart from spending, the legislation provides Democrats in Congress and Obama an opportunity to reverse Bush-era policy on selected issues.

It loosens restrictions on travel to Cuba, as well as the sale of food and medicine to the communist island-nation.

In another change, the legislation bans Mexican-licensed trucks from operating outside commercial zones along the border with the United States. The Teamsters Union, which supported Obama's election last year, hailed the move.

The Bush administration backed a pilot program to permit up to 500 trucks from 100 Mexican motor carriers access to U.S. roads.

The legislation covers programs for numerous Cabinet-level and other agencies, and takes the place of regular annual spending bills that did not pass last year as a result of a deadlock between the Bush administration and the Democratic-controlled Congress.

Possible suspect in Levy death had troubled past

WASHINGTON (AP)—Since Washington intern Chandra Levy disappeared in 2001, one name had been familiar: Gary Condit, the former congressman who was questioned by authorities in her disappearance.

But a man named Ingmar Guandique was never far away. The Salvadoran immigrant lived in an apartment near the park where Levy's remains were found. He's now serving time in federal prison for assaulting two female joggers there weeks after Levy disappeared.

An arrest in the Levy case is imminent, and two people with knowledge of the case have told The Associated Press that Guandique will be charged.

Relatives and court records offer a glimpse of Guandique, who was described by prosecutors as a violent predator with drug and alcohol problems and poor self-control.

But there are still few answers for why it's taken so long to make an arrest in a case that some say brought down a popular congressman and embarrassed District of Columbia police.

Guandique left the San Miguel area of eastern El Salvador for the U.S. about eight years ago. He had been in the Washington area since at least 2000, moving often and taking day-laborer jobs like carpentry and construction, according to court records.

But he quickly ran into legal and personal problems. The Washington Post, which explored the Levy case in a 12-part series last year, reported that Guandique was an illegal immigrant who had abused his ex-girlfriend, Iris Portillo.

Sheila Phillips Cruz, Guandique's former landlady, told The Post that around the time Chandra Levy disappeared, Guandique had scratches on his throat and a swollen lip. She said Guandique told her he'd been in a fight with Portillo, who denied that she hit him.

Cruz said Guandique began drinking around that time, and "just got really strange."

"Half the time he didn't know where he was," she told the newspaper.

Attempts by The Associated Press this week to reach Cruz were unsuccessful and Portillo declined comment.

In May 2001, Guandique was arrested for breaking into a neighbor's apartment and stealing a gold ring. He would plead guilty to attempted burglary and was sentenced in February 2002 to nine months in jail. He was on release in that case when he was arrested for two assaults, according to court documents.

ACROSS THE NATION

Conn. child-porn convict ordered to pay victim

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. (AP)—A federal judge on Monday ordered a man convicted of possessing and distributing child pornography to pay about $200,000 in restitution to a woman who was photographed being sexually abused when she was a child. Senior U.S. District Judge Warren W. Eginton said his ruling was the first in a criminal case in which someone convicted of possessing illegal images—but not creating them—is required to pay restitution. "We're dealing with a frontier here," Eginton said, but he said judges have discretion with criminal restitution orders. The case involves Alan Hesketh, a British citizen who was sentenced in October to 78 months in prison for possessing and distributing nearly 2,000 photographs of child pornography. The resident of Stonington, Conn., was a vice president of New York-based Pfizer Inc., the world's biggest drugmaker.

More buried bodies found in NM desert, total at 10

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—Four more buried bodies have been uncovered from the mesa west of Albuquerque, including the skeletons of a woman and her fetus. Authorities believe the 10 bodies found there this month were buried by one person. Albuquerque Police Chief Ray Schultz says the remains of two people were found Saturday. The female skeleton and fetus were found Monday. Only one set of remains has been identified, Victoria Chavez, whose family reported her missing in 2004. Albuquerque homicide Sgt. Carlos Argueta said some of the victims were likely transient drug addicts and prostitutes—women who often don't have family members who report them missing.

Man who donated sperm wants DNA test for octuplets

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A former boyfriend of Nadya Suleman wants DNA testing to determine if he's the father of her 14 children, including her nearly month-old octuplets. Denis Beaudoin told ABC's "Good Morning America" on Monday that he donated sperm to Suleman during their three-year relationship in the late 1990s because she claimed to have ovarian cancer. Suleman denied Beaudoin was the donor she used to conceive her children, ABC said. When pressed, she admitted he had donated sperm to her but he was unable to have children, the network said. Beaudoin is divorced and has two children from the marriage. Beaudoin still wants DNA testing. He said was misled about why she needed him to make three sperm donations "because she couldn't have kids and, you know, it turned into this."

Asia

AP

South Korea children play beside South Korea's Hawk missiles at Korea War Memorial Museum in Seoul, South Korea, Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009.

NKorea says it is preparing satellite launch

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea said Tuesday it is preparing to shoot a satellite into orbit, its clearest reference yet to an impending launch that neighbors and the U.S. suspect will be a provocative test of a long-range missile.

The statement from the North's space technology agency comes amid growing international concern that the communist nation is gearing up to fire a version of its most advanced missile—one capable of reaching the U.S.—within a week, in violation of a U.N. Security Council resolution.

North Korea asserted last week that it bears the right to "space development"—words the regime has used in the past to disguise a missile test. In 1998, North Korea test-fired a Taepodong-1 ballistic missile over Japan and then claimed to have put a satellite into orbit.

"Full-fledged preparations are under way to launch the pilot communications satellite Kwangmyongsong No. 2" at a launch site in Hwadae in the northeast, the North's agency said in a statement carried by Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency. The report did not say when the launch would take place.

Southern wildfires continue to rage in Australia

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Officials warned Tuesday the wildfires that devastated southern Australia this month could flare anew when high winds and hot temperatures sweep the region later this week, and raised the death toll from the blazes to 210.

Australia's insurance council, meanwhile, reported thousands of claims totaling more than a half-billion dollars in damage from the Feb. 7 fires that tore through Victoria state.

Four major fires are still burning in the region, and officials warned that temperatures are expected to rise on Friday to the high 90s Fahrenheit (high 30s Celsius) and be accompanied by strong winds.

"It is important that people understand the events of Black Saturday are not over," Victoria state's Emergency Services Commissioner Bruce Esplin said, referring to the Feb. 7 fires. "The devastating fire season continues."

ASIAN BRIEFS

Groups seek probe into Filipino radioman's killing

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—International media watchdogs demanded a swift investigation into the killing of a Filipino radio commentator, saying Tuesday that it looks like another in a rash of assassinations of outspoken journalists. Ernesto Rollin, production manager and commentator of Radio DXSY in southern Nisamis Occidental province, was waiting for a ride to work Monday when one of two gunmen on a motorcycle shot him several times, killing him instantly, police said. Police said the motive for the killing was not clear. Station manager Alex Sy said apart from hosting a morning program in which he discussed public complaints and issues, Rollin was on the payroll of local politicians and acted as their spokesman during elections. The Paris-based Reporters Without Borders said the way Rollin died "indicates it was a contract killing ordered by Rollin's enemies and carried out by professional hit men." Bob Dietz, the Asia coordinator for the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, said the reason for Rollin's killing was not yet clear "but the circumstances strongly resemble the frequent assassinations of Philippine journalists for their outspoken reporting."

Thai anti-government group stages protest

BANGKOK (AP)—Several thousand protesters allied with exiled former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra marched toward the prime minister's office Tuesday, demanding a dissolution of Parliament and the holding of snap elections. One of the protest leaders, Jakrapob Penakir, said the demonstrators would camp out around Government House for at least two days to press their demands but would not force their way into the compound. Jakrapob said the protest was also being staged to show Thailand's Southeast Asian neighbors that the government of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva had no right to rule. Leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations are to begin their annual summit this Thursday at a beach resort near Bangkok. Abhisit was appointed prime minister in December after a court order that ousted Thaksin's allies.

Families of Chinese miners angered by lack of info

GUJIAO, China (AP)—Mining authorities promised Monday to compensate the families of 74 workers who were killed in a series of explosions in China's deadliest mine disaster in a year, the official news agency said. Rescuers pulled hundreds of workers to safety following the blasts early Sunday in a shaft of the Tunlan Coal Mine in Shanxi province. Rescue operations were called off Monday with all workers accounted for, officials said. Of the more than 300 rescued from the Tunlan mine in Gujiao, near the provincial capital of Taiyuan, 114 remained in the hospital, five of them in critical condition, a Shanxi government spokesman said on condition of anonymity, citing policy. Xinhua News Agency said provincial mining authorities set aside 28 million yuan ($4 million) for compensation. Families of dead miners would receive at least 200,000 yuan ($29,000) and their children would get compensation until they turn 18.

World

Official: US aid to Gaza to top $900 million

JERUSALEM (AP)—The United States is preparing to donate more than $900 million for the reconstruction of Gaza, a U.S. official said Monday, as U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton prepared to attend a donors conference for the war-ravaged territory next week.

Israeli and Palestinian officials said earlier Monday that Clinton will visit Israel and the West Bank during the first week of March for her first trip to the region as America's top diplomat.

Clinton said during her Asia trip this month that she would attend an international donors conference in Egypt on March 2 to discuss reconstruction in Gaza.

She provided no other details, but a U.S. official in the United States said Monday that the Obama administration's donation will likely top $900 million in humanitarian and rebuilding aid to the Palestinian Authority to help Gaza recover from Israel's offensive against Hamas last month.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the donation had not received final approval, said the exact amount was still to be determined.

The official added that the aid would not go to Hamas. U.S. officials have no formal contacts with the Islamic militant group Hamas, which runs a separate Palestinian administration in the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli officials, meanwhile, said Clinton will arrive in Israel on March 2 for meetings with the country's top leaders. Israel is currently ruled by a caretaker government as Likud Party leader Benjamin Netanyahu cobbles together a new coalition.

Guantanamo detainee freed after 4 years in prison

LONDON (AP)—The first Guantanamo detainee released since President Barack Obama took office returned to Britain on Monday, saying his seven years of captivity and torture at an alleged CIA covert site in Morocco went beyond his "darkest nightmares."

Binyam Mohamed's allegations—including repeated beatings and having his genitals sliced by a scalpel—have sparked lawsuits that could ensnare the American and British governments in protracted court battles.

Looking frail from a hunger strike, Mohamed, who once was accused by U.S. authorities of being part of a conspiracy to detonate a bomb on American soil, stepped off a charter plane and was whisked away by police, border control agents and immigration officials.

The 30-year-old Ethiopian refugee, who moved to Britain as a teenager, was freed after four hours of questioning.

Attorney General Eric Holder, who traveled Monday to Guantanamo Bay as the Obama administration weighs what is needed to shut the facility, thanked Britain for its cooperation in the case.

"The friendship and assistance of the international community is vitally important as we work to close Guantanamo, and we greatly appreciate the efforts of the British government to work with us on the transfer of Binyam Mohamed," he said.

Antarctica: a meeting of polar and political minds

TROLL RESEARCH STATION, Antarctica (AP)—Policymakers met polar explorers on the boundless ice of Antarctica Monday as a U.S.-Norwegian scientific expedition came in from the cold to report on the continent's ice sheets, a potential source for a catastrophic "big melt" from global warming.

"Our preliminary finding is that there's a slight warming trend in East Antarctica," American glaciologist Ted Scambos told the group of visiting environment ministers.

It was an early estimate regarding just one region of a huge continent, drawn from first analyses of ice cores drilled along the team's route. But it caught the ear of the visiting politicians, who are this year weighing a grand new global deal for cutting greenhouse-gas emissions to avert the worst of climate change.

"It's important to hear the latest science," said Hilary Benn, Britain's environment minister. "I was impressed that they're finding temperatures rising. But there is still so much not known."

WORLD BRIEFS

French teen killed by Cairo bomb was on class trip

CAIRO (AP)—The French teenagers had finished a day touring Cairo's 650-year-old Khan el-Khalili bazaar, gathering in its main square to board a bus back to their hotel. Then the blast went off. The explosion killed a 17-year-old girl with the group and wounded 24 other people, most of them fellow students. According to the government account released Monday, a bomb had been planted underneath a stone bench on which the girl was sitting. The Sunday night blast was the first attack in three years targeting foreigners in Egypt, and it raised fears of a blow to the country's vital tourism industry, which is already suffering from the global economic downturn. The attack shocked the Paris suburb of Levallois-Perret, hometown of the more than 40 high school students who were on a tour of Egypt. "We are faced with a dreadful drama," the suburb's mayor Patrick Balkany told France's RTL radio on Monday.

Swiss to vote on tighter gun controls

GENEVA (AP)—Switzerland's part-time soldiers traditionally store their guns in the attic, in a cupboard or under the bed. They see it as their honor and duty to keep their weapons close at hand. But campaigners said Monday they have collected around 120,000 signatures to force a nationwide referendum on whether to confine army weapons to military compounds. They say the proliferation of firearms has led to suicides and homicides throughout the nation, and they want tighter firearms controls. "Almost every day a person commits suicide with a firearm in Switzerland," said Josef Lang, a lawmaker for the Green Party who is campaigning for the proposal alongside the Social Democrats, rights groups and others. Service in Switzerland's militia army is compulsory for men, and conscripts have to take their guns home between call-ups.

Gunmen attack governor's convoy, kill guard

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP)—Gunmen shot at a convoy carrying the governor of a violence-wracked border state, killing one of his bodyguards and wounding two other agents. The federal Attorney General's Office said Monday it did not appear that Chihuahua Gov. Jose Reyes Baeza was the target of an assassination attempt. State investigators believe the shooting erupted over a traffic altercation between the bodyguards at the back of the convoy and armed men in two other cars, the office said in a statement. It did not provide further details. Reyes Baeza said gunmen in the two cars fired high-powered weapons Sunday night at a vehicle two cars behind his in a convoy in the state capital, Chihuahua city. The two wounded agents were in stable condition on Monday and one of the attackers was hospitalized with a gunshot to the head. The other attackers fled.

Campus Life

On being a model for the islands' youths

By MONETH DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The speaker of the 11th CNMI Youth Congress and Marianas High School Model of the Year, Alana May Leon Guerrero, shares her thoughts and experiences on straddling two roles for Commonwealth youths. In her third term at the Youth Congress, Leon Guerrero believes that there is more to be done for the youth of CNMI. She is a junior at MHS and a member of the CJPA Youth Advisory Council. Alana is a proud daughter of Jose and Alicia Leon Guerrero.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Youth Congress Speaker Alana May Leon Guerrero, second from right, poses with her parents, Jose and Alicia Leon Guerrero, and Rep. Rosemond Santos.

Question: How does it feel like to lead your fellow youth senators from the three islands and being a role model for all CNMI youths?

Answer: The feeling can become quite overwhelming but I am truly blessed and grateful for the many supporters and loved ones who continue to steer me in the right direction. When making decisions, I remind myself that I'm representing every youth in the Commonwealth and that I must always do the right thing.

Q. What specific task at the Youth Congress challenges you the most? How about as a Model of the Year [at MHS]?

A. With the Youth Congress, the thing that challenges me the most is the fact that we're strapped with the budget. There are many programs and activities that I'd like to implement but we're not allowed with the current Youth Congress budget. I am grateful that my fellow colleagues understand this and they are willing to help find other ways to implement the programs or activities we want for the youth.

With MHS, working with the faculty and administration can be a challenge. I've tried many times to approach them about the many issues that can be addressed and resolved but time does not allow them to do so.

Q. What important contributions have you already made for the youth of the CNMI?

A. I authored the recently passed Curfew Act. When you think about it, it may sound bad for the youth but I'm just thinking of the well-being and the safety of all the youth in the Commonwealth. Many individuals and youth are taken away because of delinquency and such. With enforcement of the act, it may resolve some of the crimes on island. Also, parents will *finally* take control of their children and know their whereabouts than to let them go wherever and whenever.

Q. What legacy would you like to leave with the Youth Congress?

A. Like with every speaker I've served with, it's not the legacy I'd like to leave behind…but knowing that we've fought together for the betterment of the youth in the Commonwealth. That will do justice for me. It's knowing that in one way or another we've impacted one's life or the youth community. This term, I am the only incumbent that made it in. So far, I believe that my colleagues and I are fighting the good fight, and that's being the voice of the youth on the hill. It's hard when a bunch of lawmakers look at us as "kids"; we're "young adults" growing, adapting, and taking our place in this great Commonwealth.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Members of the 11th CNMI Youth Congress pose after their swearing in at the Legislature building on Capital Hill.

Q. What remarkable and memorable experience and lessons would you like to share with the community youth pertaining to your role at the Youth Congress and as an MHS model of the year?

A. Being elected as the 11th CNMI Youth Congress Speaker is the most remarkable and memorable experience ever. It's knowing that I've received the confidence and trust from not only my colleagues but the youth community as a whole. It's the fact that all who voted for me believed in me and trusts that I will make the right decision and continue to be the voice for the youth of the Commonwealth.

Q. Message, recommendations, and plans for the betterment of CNMI youth?

A. I would like all the youth to take a chance and know and understand the Youth Congress and be the solution to the many youth problems that exist in the Commonwealth. Be an active member of your community. Trust me, it's fun and educational at the same time. Be the voice you want heard on the hill. At the end of the day, you will be satisfied and content with the progress you've made and could continue doing. I know I have and I will continue to fight the everlasting fight, and that's for the youth of the Commonwealth to be heard!

Transition to college harder on men than women

By KATHLEEN MEGAN
(C) 2008, THE HARTFORD COURANT

When Aman Kidwai arrived at the University of Connecticut, he was scared, nervous and anxious like most young men. And, like most young men, he didn't talk about it.

He had played football and run track in high school, and while he might have played sports at a Division 3 school, he wasn't going to play at UConn. He was used to the highly structured life of high school, with every moment spoken for, ever-vigilant parents and teachers and a team full of friends.

The university felt cold and impersonal and he had a hard time connecting with people, much less discussing his uncomfortable feelings.

"Those are tough feelings to emote," said Kidwai, now a senior, "tough feelings to tell anyone about." He found himself skipping classes just because he could.

While most kids—young men and young women—have a mix of anxiety and excitement when they head off for college, experts on men and masculinity say that young men handle those feelings differently from young women and therefore often experience different problems and sometimes greater difficulties in the transition.

James M. O'Neil, a University of Connecticut professor who has been studying gender issues and masculinity for the past 30 years, said the college transition issues are a reflection of the crisis in the development of boys and young men in America. O'Neil said that he now addresses these issues in his classes on gender and masculinity, but that he wants, eventually, to explore whether students would find it helpful to have a men's center or discussion programs in residence halls.

While girls are raised to feel relatively comfortable expressing emotions, to seek help by talking to friends, family or professionals, O'Neil said, young men learn early on that it isn't considered strong or masculine to express fear, anxiety or other vulnerable feelings. "If you haven't been taught to label your feelings, to express them and use them constructively, if you don't have that skill," O'Neil said, those feelings may be expressed in "negative ways." Troubled young men are more likely than women to drink, to act out aggressively, to fight or vandalize, O'Neil said, while troubled young women are more likely to talk out their issues with a friend or to seek help at a counseling center.

Professionals at other universities and colleges say they see the same patterns. Susan Birge, director of counseling and psychological services at Fairfield University, said young men "just don't have societal permission to speak up and ask for help," Birge said, and college is a place where asking for help can be crucial for success.

Jason Zelesky, wellness outreach coordinator at Clark University in Worcester, Mass., said that "the whole formation or the social construction of masculinity sends young men these lofty and unfair messages about what it means to be a young man," and that it's "a narrative of violence, confrontation, fierce independence, of a sort of emotional apathy or non-communication of emotion with the exception of anger."

"Our dashboard indicators are pretty convincing that for the most part it is men who are the predominant judicial load (at the university); men acting out in residence halls, men transported to the hospital for drinking too much," Zelesky said. "The numbers bear that out."

Zelesky said he does a plenty of outreach with students and is starting men's discussion groups to help men learn to talk about their emotions and how to seek help when they need it.

At the University of Connecticut, the numbers show that young men are more likely to wind up with disciplinary issues. Catherine Cocks, the director of community standards, said that of the 2,489 students referred to the office during the last academic year, 65 percent were men.

There are experts who believe that any crisis affecting boys in general is overblown, but O'Neil feels the signs are clear. He notes the trends he finds troubling: a higher percentage of boys in special education than girls, more male high school dropouts, more males in prison, fewer young men enrolling in colleges, more males dropping out of colleges and a higher suicide rate among young men.

These trends make it crucial, he said, that parents, educators and professionals take steps to intervene in much the same ways that were done for girls in the past 20 or 30 years when they were not achieving as much as boys.

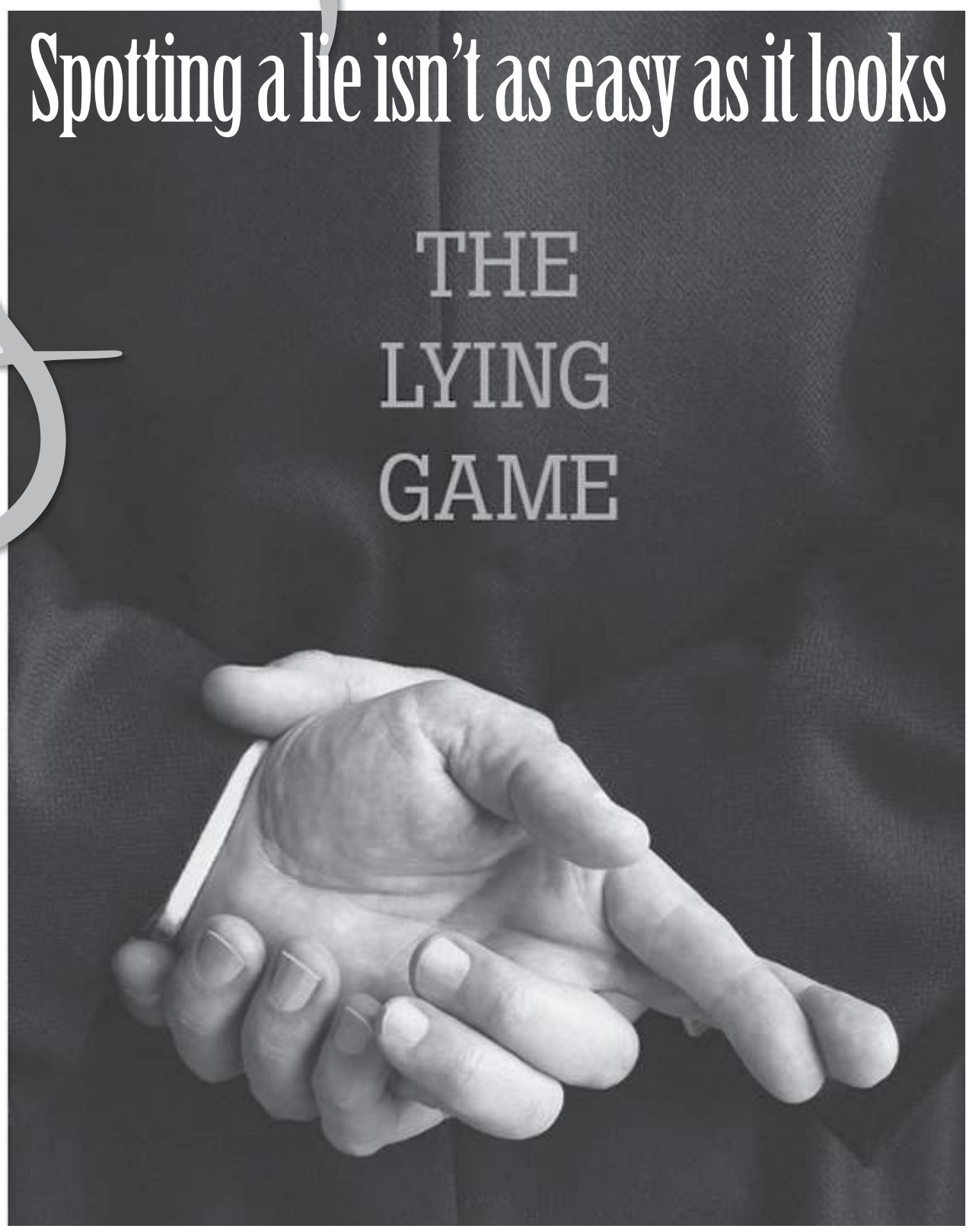
O'Neil believes that just as women's centers at colleges were established, there should be men's centers that offer safe places for them to discuss their feelings. Birge said that at Fairfield they have tried to destigmatize counseling for boys and have a male therapist on staff. "We put (him) out in front to showcase that here is a guy who is smart, a skilled professional, but has emotional availability."

There are also other ways to make it easier for a guy to seek therapy. Chris Kilmartin, professor of psychology at the University of Mary Washington in Virginia, said young men aren't very comfortable talking directly about their feelings but can be encouraged to tell stories about what's been happening. "What I try to listen for are the emotional themes of the story. . . . It's the Columbo routine."

Mark Stevens, director of the counseling center at the California State University, Northridge said he uses "guy-to-guy" language and is careful not to have an overly feminine waiting room. "If you've got scented candles out there and Zen stuff all over," he said, "the guys aren't going to relate to that stuff."

Life & Style

Spotting a lie isn't as easy as it looks



By NEELY TUCKER
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Science is closing in on humanoids and their seedy necessity to lie about almost everything, but don't worry. We've had tens of thousands of years of practice at it, and until you stick your head inside a machine that plays with the protons in your brain so that it can film the neurons firing in your prefrontal cortex, you can probably get away with it.

Neurological research is showing that lies are so interwoven into our central nervous systems that it's not even an unnatural act. Lies require work in at least five sections of the brain, and to separate them from the truth requires machinations that make rocket science look like 2 (plus) 2. Otherwise, lie and truth are indistinguishable.

"Lying is ubiquitous" in the brain, says Ruben Gur, one member of a team at the University of Pennsylvania that is using short films of the brain, called "functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging," to detect lies. If lies "were contained in one section of the brain, it would be worn out at the end of the day."

Hence the fascination, as displayed in the new Fox television series "Lie to Me," of our near mystical belief that we might somehow learn to parse fact from fiction by sight and sense alone. That we, as mere human beings, can tell when we are being told a lie.

"Lie to Me" follows the fictional Dr. Cal Lightman, "the world's leading deception expert," who has the ability to determine who is lying and why through a scary-good reading of body language and facial expression. The show's tagline asserts that "the truth is written all over our faces," promising that people are literally lying to your face and you don't even know it.

The show, which comes across as sort of silly, is based on the entirely serious work of Paul Ekman, the famed psychologist and author, who sold Fox his professional life rights for the series and acts as its consultant. Ekman, 75, has spent more than four decades studying nonverbal communication and its sexy sidekick, truth detection.

From his professorial perch at the University of California at San Francisco, he's written more than a dozen books, including "Telling Lies" and "Emotions Revealed." The American Psychological Association named him as one of the most influential psychologists of the 20th century. His firm runs seminars for people—say, security staffers at airports—who want to study his "micro-expression expression training tool" system to see who might actually be dangerous.

Here's the kicker: You can't.

No, really. You can't.

"We've been testing people's ability to discern a lie for 15 years now and haven't noticed any real change over that time," he says in a telephone interview. "We've tested about 15,000 people in every profession you can think of—CIA, judges, lawyers. Less than 1 percent are any good at it. Most people are only at about the level of flipping a coin."

He writes: "Most liars can fool most of the people most of the time."

He says that you might become pretty good at lie detection, with training, but only in your professional life. Even federal investigators who run a crisp interrogation are lousy at picking out lies at home.

"Cops tend to do well in detecting lies about theft, and therapists tend to do better about lies about emotion," says Maureen O'Sullivan, a professor of psychology at the University of San Francisco who often works with Ekman. "But in their personal lives, they can be complete dolts."

Here's a little bon mot, from the research files.

One of the most common thing people do in hiding emotions, Ekman notes, is to smile. So let's say you notice someone very quickly tighten their lips (a highly reliable sign of anger) and then smile. They are actually baring their teeth.

Let's go burrowing in the brain. Let's look at how lies get started.

Neuroscientists like Gur and research partner Daniel Langleben have spent the past decade learning to spot lies bopping around the bumps and grooves of the brain. Their fMRIs are the hot new thing in truth detection.

By using extremely controlled conditions—keeping the test subject's head perfectly still, limiting the selection of answers, forcing the subject to answer by pressing a button, asking hundreds of carefully prepared questions—they can spot truthful and dishonest responses with an accuracy rate north of 90 percent. It is not just that the brain uses more energy to tell a lie, Langleben says, but that the response pattern is visibly different, at least during the highly structured questionnaire.

Their finding is revolutionary in at least one aspect: It demonstrates that lies exist (a) in a distinct physical form and (b) those forms are replicated across people of different ages, races and religious backgrounds.

In other words, when we lie, our brains process it in a way different from the truth. Enter Ekman.

For four decades, he has videotaped thousands of people of all ages and cultural backgrounds when they are telling the truth, lying or just telling a narrative story. He has broken emotions into seven universal headings: anger, fear, disgust, contempt, surprise, sadness and happiness. From his data, he created a taxonomy for body movements (emblems, illustrations, manipulations) that can reveal or hide these emotions as well as a vast catalog of facial movement. He identified possible interpretations of all these, the two main ways of lying (concealment and falsification) and the different emotions in lying (guilt, fear of getting caught, delight in fooling the subject).

He discovered what poker players would call "tells," or unconscious indicators of emotion. For example, tightening the lips is one of the most reliable signs of anger because it is so physically hard to do, Ekman says, and often takes place before people are aware that they're doing it.

To get at the truth, let's break down how you use your body to talk.

First, there are "emblems," such as the "thumbs up" gesture, which is recognized to mean "OK!" Emblems are helpful in truth detection, but only when they are arrested in mid-gesture: shrugging one shoulder, starting to raise and flap your hands away from yourself, as if to say, "Oh, I'm finished with that"—but halting the gesture. Your body just told the truth before you could stop it. These are "emblematic slips," Ekman says, and indicate the subject is trying to suppress or alter information.

Second, there are "illustrations," such as waving your arms or jabbing a finger in the air. Illustrations decrease when people tell lies because liars are being careful and unconsciously inhibiting their motions.

Last are "manipulations," which are personal grooming tics, such as biting your fingernails. Manipulations, it turns out, don't mean anything one way or the other—and yet studies show most people list these tics as one of the clearest signs of dishonesty. They're not. People who read them are committing an "Othello error," in Ekman's jargon, a reference to the Shakespearean character who falsely believed his wife to be an adulteress.

These interpretational errors are so profound, Ekman says, that one of his main concerns with the show is that, "We don't want jurors thinking that because they saw `Lie to Me,' that they can tell when someone on the stand is lying."

He adds, "It takes us two to four days in law enforcement training to get any sort of improvement. The 1 percent who are really good at it, we call `wizards.' "

Now here's the twist: Truth is not the only issue that's important. Trust counts, too.

At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab, researchers study the physical dynamics of human interactions. Their studies show that body language, vocal pattern and pitch are so critical to human trust that they can predict the success or failure of a sales pitch by reading body language and vocal patterns alone. They don't even need to know what you're saying to know if the other person is likely to trust it.

With a device called a sociometer, project director Alex Pentland detects if you are looking at the person you're talking to, and a recorder tracks the timing, speed and inflection of speech (but not the content).

It turns out that people who use positive body language and correct vocal inflection—nodding heads in agreement, leaning forward in their chairs, speaking in the same vocal range and speed as conversational partners—will win other people's trust.

"The background of this is our human communication from 50,000 or 100,000 years ago, when we didn't have that many words, but were still able to communicate and coordinate very closely," he says. "We're still extraordinarily sensitive to socially appropriate behavior, but it's so deeply buried that we are almost unconscious of it."

Then again, this just describes body language that honest people tend to use. It doesn't mean dishonest people couldn't ape that behavior to lie to you.

In the end, "truth wizards"—the 1 percent or so of people who can see past all this to discern lies really well—have a unique ability to keep their minds open, O'Sullivan says. "They don't hurry to a conclusion. They'll live with indecision. Most of us don't want to do that, including me. People want certainty."

She laughs and says: "I want things to be nice."

And this is the problem, she notes: Things are often not nice, and yet people who should know better ignore or look past the unpleasantness of the facts to see a happier version of reality and to keep things, you know, nice. Besides, to constantly double-check the information your friends and family gives you might uncover more of the truth about some things, but what you'll really be communicating is that you do not find them worthy of your trust. "Show me" might be a nifty motto for Missouri, but it's a lousy one for a marriage.

"People really don't want to know all the truth all the time," O'Sullivan says.

"No important relationship survives if trust is totally lost," Ekman writes.

So there it is. Absolute truth is doomed because the search to ferret it out would ultimately be so consuming as to eradicate trust, which is the far more solid building block of human relationships.

It turns out that we only want the truth sometimes. What we need is trust, even if that means we are certain to be betrayed. It is, as any fMRI can show you, the human condition.

YSL auction fetches record price for Matisse

PARIS (AP)—A painting by Henri Matisse sold Monday for euro32.1 million ($41.1 million)—a record price for a work by the artist—at an auction of art from the estate of Yves Saint Laurent, auction house Christie's said.

The sale came at the start of a three-day Paris auction of art from the collection of the late French fashion designer that some are calling "the sale of the century."

A Piet Mondrian painting that had inspired one of Saint Laurent's most memorable dresses sold for nearly euro20 million.

"I never doubted the success of this sale," Pierre Berge, Saint Laurent's longtime partner, told reporters after the auction. "When you have a collection of this importance, and of this demand, you stop being an amateur art lover—and you become more or less an expert."

The 1911 Matisse oil painting of a vase of cowslips on a blue-and-pink rug, with the French title "Les coucous, tapis bleu et rose," sold for euro35.9 million—including the buyer's premium, Christie's said.

AP

A 1911 Henri Matisse painting called "Les coucous, Tapis bleu et Rose," (Cuckoos, blue and pink carpet) from his cubist period, is being auctioned Monday, Feb. 23, 2009 at the Grand Palais in Paris.

Mondrian's 1922 painting "Composition in Blue, Red, Yellow and Black," with rectangles of saturated colors that had inspired Saint Laurent's 1965 shift dress, sold for euro19.2 million ($24.6 million), or about twice the pre-auction estimate.

That was one of two other works that also set auction-price records for the individual artists, Christie's said. The other was a wood Constantin Brancusi sculpture, "Madame L.R.," which went for euro26 million ($33.3 million). Those prices do not include the buyer's premium.

Christie's officials said they were still working on confirming the identities of the buyers, who mostly came from North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

The night's big surprise was that the lot that had been expected to fetch the highest price—a 1914-1915 Picasso "Instruments de musique sur un gueridon," (Musical Instruments on a Table)—didn't sell.

The painting of a guitar from the Spanish artist's cubist period had been estimated to sell for euro25 million to euro30 million, but the bidding never got past euro21 million.

"I don't understand" why the Picasso didn't sell, Berge confessed, before adding: "I hope that I'm not going to surprise you because I am very happy that I can keep this painting."

The sale came as the auction sidestepped a legal controversy earlier Monday. A French judge refused to halt the sale of disputed Chinese bronze fountainheads due for sale later during the three-day auction.

The bronze heads—of a rabbit and a rat—disappeared from the summer Imperial Palace on the outskirts of Beijing when French and British forces sacked it at the close of the second Opium War in 1860.

The dispute had cast a shadow over the three-day auction at Paris' Grand Palais museum of 733 works collected over half a century by Saint Laurent and Pierre Berge, his longtime companion. The Chinese artifacts are to be sold later in the auction. News reports say they are expected to fetch up euro10 million ($13 million) each.

Lawyers for a China-linked association, known as APACE, sought to block the sale of the bronzes. The group acknowledged that Saint Laurent acquired the bronzes legally, but said they should be returned to China or at least displayed in a museum.

Berge displayed political defiance toward China.

"I'm absolutely ready to give myself to China, with my two heads of the sculpture," he said in English. "The only thing I ask is, for the Chinese government to have human rights, to give liberty to the Tibet people and to welcome the Dalai Lama."

The fountainheads date to the early Qing Dynasty, established by invading Manchu tribesmen in 1644. The Christie's catalog says they were made for the Zodiac fountain of the summer Imperial Palace.

Other lots include sculptures from ancient Egypt and Rome, ivory crucifixes and silver German beer steins that once covered every available surface of Saint Laurent's homes. Also on sale is his Art Deco furniture and his bed.

The sale is expected to gross euro200 million-euro300 million ($250 million-$380 million). A portion of the proceeds will go to support AIDS research.

Saint Laurent died in June at age 71 of brain cancer.

Lucian Freud paints wine label for French chateau

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. (AP)—A new painting by British artist Lucian Freud was unveiled at a South Beach design museum, but it wasn't the only new work of art in the gallery. The other one combined hints of blackberry, white pepper and vanilla with toastier notes and rich tannins.

Freud had been commissioned to create the label for the Chateau Mouton Rothschild 2006.

When Baroness Philippine de Rothschild presented Freud's work Thursday at The Wolfsonian-Florida International University, many eyes were directed downward to glasses of the freshly uncorked, garnet-colored wine from the vineyards northwest of Bordeaux, France, where the baroness' family has produced its famed claret for five generations.

"If we didn't have a wine of such unquestionable quality, we couldn't put paintings on the label," the baroness said.

A selection of the labels and the original artworks commissioned for them since 1945 are on display at the Miami Beach museum through March 8.

While other vintners have produced distinct logos to draw attention on crowded store shelves, the Chateau Mouton Rothschild label relies on its tradition and elite reputation as it is redesigned for every vintage, said Marianne Lamonaca, the Wolfsonian's chief curator.

The baroness' father, Baron Philippe de Rothschild, commissioned the poster artist Jean Carlu to design the label in 1924 to mark the first vintage bottled entirely at the chateau. He revived the art label with a victorious "V" by Philippe Jullian in 1945 to celebrate the end of the war.

AP

This undated photo released by the Chateau Mouton Rothschild winery, shows the 2006 label designed by British artist Lucian Freud.

When the baron took over his family's estate in 1922, most wine labels simply stated a chateau's name. Choosing an artist to illustrate the label was one of his many innovations to modernize the winemaking traditions in the Bordeaux region, Lamonaca said.

"He said that winemaking is itself an art, with the kinds of decisions that go into making great wine," Lamonaca said. "He felt that having the work of artists on the labels was a fitting combination."

The baron initially intended to mark a historic event from the following year for the next label, his daughter said. In 1946, that event was Gandhi's death.

"Gandhi didn't touch a glass of wine!" the baroness said, chuckling.

So, the baron commissioned a pastoral scene by Jean Hugo. "He realized art was more important than history," the baroness said.

Tenth
Death
Anniversary
We, the family of the late
Maria Kanako
Mori Erra
Would like to invite all relatives
and friends to join us in prayers on her
Tenth Year Death Anniversary.
Mass is being offered at the San Vicente Church beginning
February 23 to March 3, 2009 at 6:00pm.
On the final day, Tuesday, March 3, anniversary mass
will be celebrated at 6:00pm.
Appreciation dinner will be served after the mass
at the San Vicente Church Social hall.
Kinisou Chapur
Dangkulo Na Si Yu'us Maase
Joe & Marcia "Ruri"Ayuyu and Family

'Slumdog' celebrations fill Mumbai's crowded slums

AP

Neighbors of actor Azharuddin Mohammed Ismail watch the a telecast of the 81st Annual Academy Awards near his home, in a slum in Bandra, suburban Mumbai, India, Monday, Feb. 23, 2009.

MUMBAI, India (AP)—In the narrow lanes behind the Mumbai train tracks, the slum's first Oscar party turned into a raucous celebration of two hometown heroes, complete with Bollywood dance moves and squeals of joy from old friends.

Every time the big-eyed girl who calls this slum home appeared on TV, her friends gawked, beamed, shouted—and danced.

Rubina Ali, 9, was plucked from the tin roof shack she shares with her parents and six siblings in this squalid Mumbai slum to star in "Slumdog Millionaire," the darling of this year's Academy Awards.

Her friend and neighbor, Azharuddin Mohammed Ismail, 10, was also chosen for the film, and both were flown to Los Angeles to watch "Slumdog" nab eight Academy Awards, including the Oscars' highest honor for best film.

Crowds gathered around the few television sets in the slum and it took barely a minute for word of each award to spread through the slum's winding lanes.

"It seems like happiness is falling from the sky," said Sohail Qureshi, a neighbor who said he had watched Rubina grow up.

The Bandra slum could not be farther from the Hollywood glitz, stretch limousines and designer dresses of the Oscars.

Azhar lives in a lean-to made of plastic tarpaulins and moldy blankets. Rubina's home is perched above an ocean of trash. Dirty train tracks and a clogged highway form the slum's borders.

Hordes of journalists descended on the neighborhood Monday. TV tripods straddled the thin stream of sewage outside Rubina's home while rows of satellite trucks idled outside a usually sleepy tea stall.

"Normally, no one talks to us and no one comes here, but now everyone is here," Mohammed Ismail, Azhar's father, said before a bouquet of flashing bulbs.

If the Oscar excitement brought a sheen of glamour to the community, it vanished Monday shortly after the final award was announced.

The journalists left, the dancing stopped and life pressed on as always. The sweatshop men hunched over humming sewing machines. Squatting children relieved themselves by the train tracks. Mothers washed their dishes in murky water.

"I am poor," Fakrunissa Sheikh, 40, said inside her lean-to next to Azhar's.

About 65 million Indians—roughly a quarter of the urban population—live in slums, according to government surveys. Health care is often nonexistent, child labor is rampant and inescapable poverty forms the backdrop of everyday life.

Although everyone from the local butcher to the prime minister called the Oscar coup a proud day for the country, "Slumdog Millionaire" was hardly a phenomenon with Indian audiences.

"Hit in the West, flop in the East," read a front page headline in DNA's Sunday newspaper. The film was a tough sell in Indian movie theaters because it was largely in English, featured few giant stars, and skimped on the dance numbers.

Oscar-winner 'Slumdog' a millionaire beneficiary

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Slumdog Millionaire" hauled in the most Oscars but it also received the biggest bounce at the box office of the best-picture nominees.

The rags-to-riches tale brought in an extra $54 million domestically since its nomination Jan. 22—more than doubling its gross since its November premiere, to $98 million to date.

The lift for the winner of eight Oscars on Sunday, including best picture and director, was more than all of the four other best-picture nominees combined, according to tracking firm Media By Numbers LLC.

"The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," the next biggest beneficiary from the post-nomination period and the winner of three Oscars, added just $20.6 million to its $124.2 million total.

The sometime disconnect between critical acclaim and box-office success was given a humorous nod by host Hugh Jackman in his opening number.

"'The Reader,' I haven't seen 'The Reader.' I know I need to see 'The Reader,'" Jackman sang, referring the Holocaust-themed drama, for which Kate Winslet won the best actress award. "I ran out of time."

The worsening economy almost sank "Slumdog" as Time Warner Inc. announced it would shut down Warner Independent, which had bought its North American distribution rights. The movie was headed for a direct-to-DVD release when News Corp.'s Fox Searchlight stepped in to distribute it, eventually showing it in 1,600 theaters nationwide.

Flush with success, director Danny Boyle and producer Christian Colson said they hoped the big win would convince studios to continue to take chances on smaller films.

"Even the studios will note that we made this for 7 million pounds ($10 million), and it's going to cross $100 million in the U.S. Tuesday or Wednesday. That's good business for them," Colson said, clutching his statuette backstage.

He hoped the success would convince studios to fund independent-style films that "don't tick all the boxes" of criteria for marketing success.

"If the best of those can get made and our film helps that to happen, well I'm even prouder of these," he said.

Boyle nodded to best supporting actor winner Heath Ledger, and said small films are what give fledgling actors and directors their start.

"Heath started small as well. He started in small films. Everybody does," Boyle said. "You've got to protect them. It's difficult because the studios are under pressure, but the studios have to protect them as well."

Despite its troubled start, the uplifting story about a downtrodden boy and girl falling in love through tough times turned out to be exactly what audiences wanted to see.

"Actually it's a film that says there are more important things than money," said Simon Beaufoy, who took home an Oscar for best adapted screenplay, to reporters backstage. "That struck a chord."

Still, the win comes at a troubling time for major studios, which have announced restructuring plans as well as smaller film slates going forward to mitigate risk in a tough economy.

Several niche labels have recently shut down or been folded into their parents, including Warner Bros.' Warner Independent, Picturehouse and New Line Cinema brands, Paramount's Paramount Vantage, and Capitol Films' THINKFilm.

Among the other best-picture nominees, Universal Pictures' "Frost/Nixon" nearly doubled its post-nomination gross by $8.6 million to $17.4 million; The Weinstein Co.'s "The Reader," gained $15.3 million to $23.2 million; and "Milk," by Universal's Focus Features added $7.6 million to $28.2 million.

Britney's dad testifies for restraining order

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Britney Spears' father testified for nearly 90 minutes Monday about why he felt a long-term restraining order should be issued against three people, including the singer's former manager and an ex-boyfriend.

Jamie Spears was the first witness to testify in the restraining order case, and it did little to establish direct contact between Osama "Sam" Lutfi and his daughter since a conservatorship was established a year ago.

Calling Lutfi a "predator" and repeating an allegation that he ground medication into his daughter's food, Jamie Spears said he thought his daughter's one-time friend and manager was a danger to the family.

But he acknowledged under questioning by Lutfi's lawyer that he was not aware of any conversations between his daughter and Lutfi. And the only evidence of communication between the two was a recent call Britney Spears made to Lutfi.

Lutfi's attorney, Bryan Freedman, said the hearing "couldn't have gone any better."

He said Jamie Spears' testimony did not demonstrate why a restraining order is necessary.

Jamie Spears said he did not know if the pair talked then or since. He said Lutfi had called Spears on other phones and tried to relay a "Merry Christmas" message through the singer's hairdresser and get her to call him.

He said the call from his daughter to Lutfi was found on a prepaid cell phone that his security detail confiscated from the singer last month. The phone listed the phone numbers of Adnan Ghalib, a paparazzo who once dated the singer, and Lutfi.

Jamie Spears testified his daughter told him the phone was given to her at a hotel by someone who said it was from Lutfi and Ghalib. The singer has a cell phone, but her father said he controls her access to it.

Ghalib did not appear during Monday's hearing and was not represented by a lawyer. Jamie Spears repeatedly referred to him as "Adan" during his testimony.

"A restraining order is for severe harassing conduct that causes substantial emotional distress," Freedman said, adding that Spears' testimony "doesn't remotely come close to that."

Jamie Spears' testimony was just one part of the case that he and his lawyers could bring to justify the restraining order.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Aviva K. Bobb allowed him to testify Monday because he will be traveling later in the week, but delayed ruling on the restraining orders until at least Wednesday.

She extended a temporary restraining order against Lutfi, Ghalib and attorney Jon Eardley until Wednesday.

Jamie Spears' attorneys contend the trio attempted to sabotage the conservatorship in recent months and sought to replace Spears' court-appointed attorney, Samuel Ingham.

AP

This Dec. 2, 2008 file photo shows singer Britney Spears performing on ABC's "Good Morning America" show at the Big Apple Circus in New York.

Rapper arrested after fight at Fla. burger joint

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Rapper N.O.R.E. was arrested following a fight with a customer at a Miami Beach hamburger restaurant, police said.

N.O.R.E.

The 31-year-old performer was formerly known as Noreaga. His real name is Victor Santiago and he is known for songs "Nothin'" and "SuperThug."

Santiago, of New York, was arrested early Sunday after police said he caused a disruption at a Fatburger by yelling at another customer, ripping up a bouquet of flowers and throwing a drink at a customer.

Authorities said the rapper punched a man in the face, and yelled "Do you know who I am?" The man received a cut on the left side of his face, a police report said.

Santiago was charged with misdemeanor battery and disorderly conduct. He was taken to the Miami-Dade county jail and released.

It was not immediately clear whether he had a lawyer. A woman who identified herself as Shavala at the rapper's management agency in New York said she was not aware of the arrest and refused to comment.

Judge grants meeting between Falk and daughter

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge says Peter Falk's daughter can meet with her ailing father.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Aviva K. Bobb on Monday granted Catherine Falk a 30-minute supervised meeting with her father within 30 days.

Catherine Falk's attorney says she has not seen the former "Columbo" actor in approximately six months. She has filed to establish a conservatorship for her father, who she stated has Alzheimer's disease. Her attorney said Monday he does not know to what degree the illness has progressed.

Falk

Bobb barred anyone from discussing the meeting publicly afterward. Attorneys for Falk's wife, Shera, declined to comment.

Catherine Falk gave the thumbs-up sign and said "Thank God" after hearing Bobb's ruling.

Oscar ratings prelims show numbers up

NEW YORK (AP)—An estimated 36.3 million people watched this year's Academy Awards, an increase of more than 4 million from last year's least-watched Oscars ceremony ever.

While ABC was heartened by the larger audience, especially among younger viewers, there are still only two Oscar telecasts on record with fewer viewers, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Last year, when "No Country For Old Men" won best picture, the telecast was seen by 32 million people. The 2003 telecast, with "Chicago" as the best picture winner, was seen by 33 million people.

Hugh Jackman was the host of Sunday's show, where "Slumdog Millionaire" was the big winner. Among the earlier awards on the telecast was the late Heath Ledger's best supporting actor prize for "The Dark Knight."

At a time that the TV audience is fragmenting, Sunday's audience was the biggest for any prime-time entertainment program in two years, ABC said. The Golden Globes was seen last month by just under 15 million people.

The largest Oscars audience on record was in 1998, when 55.2 million watched "Titanic" win best picture.

Oscar host Hugh Jackman is seen backstage at the 81st Academy Awards Sunday, Feb. 22, 2009, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

AP

Howard Zieff, movie and commercial director, dies

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Howard Zieff, a film and television commercial director whose works included "Private Benjamin" and "My Girl," has died. He was 81. Zieff died Sunday of Parkinson's disease in Los Angeles, said his wife Ronda Gomez-Quinones.

Goldie Hawn, who received an Oscar nomination for best actress for her role in "Private Benjamin" in 1980, said Zieff "had a special talent for directing comedies, always a rare gift."

"What I remember and cherish most was his humor and love of laughter," Hawn said in a statement.

Zieff is also credited with helping to change the face of American commercials in the 1960s with witty slice-of life vignettes, such as his "Spicy Meatball" spot for Alka-Seltzer.

Born in Chicago in 1927, Zieff grew up in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of East Los Angeles and was a photographer for the Navy after World War II.

He moved to New York in the 1950s and worked his way up from a job as a photo assistant to become an influential commercial photographer on Madison Avenue.

He is survived by his wife and his sister.

Judge extends temp restraining order against Lutfi

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A restraining order against Britney Spears' former manager and an ex-boyfriend has been temporarily extended to give a Los Angeles judge more time to hear arguments in the case.

Judge Aviva K. Bobb extended a temporary restraining order against Sam Lutfi and paparazzo Adnan Ghalib until Wednesday morning. The singer's father, Jamie Spears, will be allowed to testify this afternoon to accommodate his travel schedule.

Bobb cited a technicality and busy court calendar for delaying the hearing.

Jamie Spears and various attorneys are seeking a lengthy restraining order against Lutfi, Ghalib and attorney Jon Eardley. They claim the trio have tried to sabotage a court-ordered conservatorship that granted Jamie Spears control over his 27-year-old daughter's personal and financial affairs a year ago

Lutfi, Ghalib and Britney Spears didn't appear in court.

Stevie Wonder honored in DC, will perform new song

WASHINGTON (AP)—Stevie Wonder is in Washington to receive the Gershwin Prize for Popular Song from the Library of Congress.

He'll also perform a newly composed song for the first time Monday evening during a concert at the library. The library commissioned the tune that will be performed with a full orchestra.

Later this week, President Barack Obama will award Wonder the Gershwin Prize in a White House ceremony.

Wonder is self-taught on piano, harmonica and other instruments and was just 12 when he first wowed national TV audiences on shows like Dick Clark's "American Bandstand."

Wonder is the second person to receive the Gershwin Prize. The first was Paul Simon in 2007.

Wife's inability to reciprocate affection frustrates husband

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Warren," and I are happily married. We love each other. We are both hardworking career professionals and have raised our family. We have always been faithful to each other.

Warren is very open with his emotions and often tells me how much he loves me. He is also very passionate during our intimate moments. The problem is, he expects me to act the same way—which I can't. Although I love my husband and always will, I do not feel comfortable expressing myself the way he does during our lovemaking. I am content to just "get it over with" while he yearns for the kissing, hugging and talk.

Despite an active sex life with Warren, he has told me many times he wishes I were more expressive and open with my feelings. I respond by telling him, "I am who I am." He is not happy that I refuse to change.

Warren is a wonderful man. Other women probably would have no problem giving him what he wants, but we are not compatible this way. I have never spoken to anyone else about this, and I'm wondering what you think.

CONFUSED IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR CONFUSED: I think it's time you considered the fact that by "refusing" to change, you have limited some interesting and rewarding possibilities in your marriage. One important aspect of "performance" is receiving feedback, as anyone in the arts can attest. Lovemaking is an art, and partners need to know when they, too, are doing something right.

I wish you would have this discussion with a therapist who specializes in sexual issues. Perhaps the person can help you more effectively communicate. If you make the effort, you'll have a happier husband, and a more satisfying marriage will follow.

DEAR ABBY: My best friend from childhood, "Ethan," whom I have known for 25 years, is being married. I'm a girl, and my parents weren't thrilled that my best friend was a guy, but they eventually accepted him as part of the family.

Ethan and I were very close. It hurt that we were separated by quite a distance during college and afterward. But we have always maintained an active e-mail correspondence.

During the last two years I have hardly heard from him, and he has ignored several attempts I have made at getting together. We now live only a couple of hours apart, and I often visit his city to see relatives.

I thought maybe we had just grown apart, but two weeks ago I received an invitation to Ethan's wedding. I had no idea he was even engaged! I was thrilled to hear from him and happy for him. I e-mailed him three times but received no response. Instead, Ethan's brother responded.

Is it expecting too much for him to respond personally? I miss him terribly and I'd love to go, but I'm feeling like he doesn't care. I met Ethan's girlfriend years ago, and she was very sweet. I don't think jealously plays a part in this.

MISSING MY FRIEND

DEAR MISSING: Time and distance can sometimes change some people. It shouldn't be this difficult to maintain a friendship. The reason Ethan communicated with you through his brother instead of directly is because he wanted a buffer—but it sends a message.

If I were you, I would send my regrets to the wedding invitation and move on. I'm sorry to be the bearer of sad tidings, but from where I sit, it appears your childhood friendship has run its course.

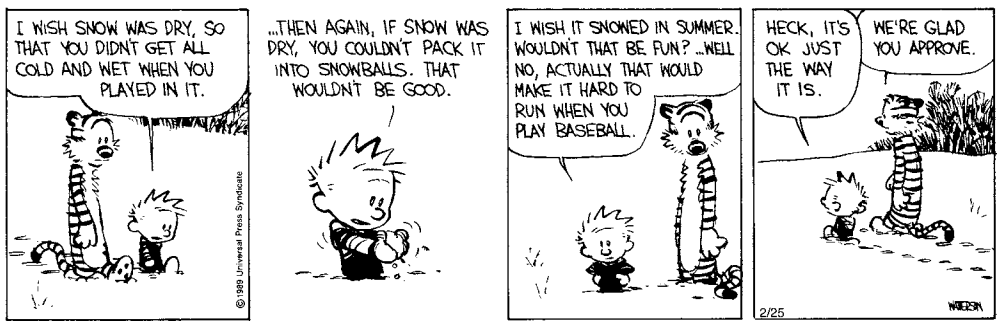
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I WISH SNOW WAS DRY, SO THAT YOU DIDN'T GET ALL COLD AND WET WHEN YOU PLAYED IN IT.
...THEN AGAIN, IF SNOW WAS DRY, YOU COULDN'T PACK IT INTO SNOWBALLS. THAT WOULDN'T BE GOOD.
I WISH IT SNOWED IN SUMMER. WOULDN'T THAT BE FUN? ...WELL NO, ACTUALLY THAT WOULD MAKE IT HARD TO RUN WHEN YOU PLAY BASEBALL.
HECK, IT'S OK JUST THE WAY IT IS.
WE'RE GLAD YOU APPROVE.
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2/25
WATTERSON

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

HA!
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Text GARFIELD to 22646 US ONLY
SPRINKLES AREN'T SO GREAT!
YOU JUST KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT
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JIM DAVIS 2-25

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I HAVE TO ADMIT... THIS IS PRETTY FUN.
RIGHT?
I'M BURNING CALORIES AND I'M ENJOYING MYSELF.
AWESOME! JUST WHAT I ALWAYS WANTED... A FIT AND HAPPY WIFE.
WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?
I SAID "I'M GOING TO GET THE SHEETS SO I CAN MAKE UP THE COUCH TO SLEEP ON TONIGHT.
www.gocomics.com
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2/25

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WOW! DID YOU CLEAN MY GLASSES?
NO. WHY?
I DON'T KNOW. EVERYTHING JUST LOOKS MORE CLEAR.
OH, YEAH. THE COMICS ARE NOW BEING PRINTED IN DIGITAL Hi-DEF.
2/25
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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 D.C. types, for short
5 Intention
8 Resistance measures
12 Egress
13 "CSI" evidence
14 Tide type
15 Rite
17 Chills and fever
18 Varlet
19 Cop's badge
21 Erstwhile Peruvian
24 Branch
25 Make fun of
28 Ellipse
30 Discoverer's cry
33 Chicken-king link
34 Rainbow fish
35 Just out
36 — canto
37 Individual
38 Choir's rendition
39 Charged bit
41 Clinton opponent
43 Onesie, e.g.
46 Borgnine autobiography
50 Shaving cream additive
51 Silver-white element
54 Sawyer's pal
55 Intimidate
56 Basilica section
57 Santa's sackful
58 Id counterpart
59 Profits

DOWN

1 Ahab portrayer
2 The yoke's on them
3 Old Italian money
4 Wonder or Nicks
5 Commotion
6 B&B
7 Baseball's "Say Hey Kid"
8 Where the elated walk
9 Domination
10 Manhandle
11 Hurried
16 Chaps
20 Sentry's command
22 Succotash ingredient
23 Duck
25 Poke
26 Hearty quaff
27 Post-breakup payment
29 Car
31 Height of fashion?
32 Possess
34 Melody
38 Lily Munster's hubby
40 Some golf tourneys
42 Floral neckwear
43 Transport for 54-Across
44 Medley
45 Fight the clock
47 "Unh-unh"
48 "Meet Me — Louis"
49 Spuds' buds
52 Yuletide beverage
53 Pair

Solution time: 21 mins.

D	E	M	I	■	B	I	Z	■	S	E	W	S
I	R	O	N	■	O	R	E	■	A	R	I	A
P	R	O	V	I	D	E	R	■	L	I	N	K
■	■	■	A	N	Y	■	O	R	A	N	G	E
H	A	Y	D	N	■	A	H	E	M	■	■	■
A	L	O	E	■	P	R	O	F	I	L	E	R
S	A	Y	■	R	E	M	U	S	■	A	V	E
P	R	O	M	O	T	E	R	■	D	R	I	P
■	■	■	A	B	E	D	■	M	E	A	L	S
U	S	U	R	E	R	■	P	A	D	■	■	■
K	I	R	K	■	P	R	O	D	U	C	E	R
E	D	G	E	■	A	Y	E	■	C	I	A	O
S	E	E	R	■	N	E	T	■	E	A	R	N

Yesterday's answer 2-25

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				16				■	17			
18					■	■	19	20				
■	■	■	21		22	23	■	24			■	■
25	26	27		■	28		29		■	30	31	32
33			■	34					■	35		
36			■	37				■	38			
■	■	39	40		■	41		42		■	■	■
43	44				45	■	■	46		47	48	49
50				■	51	52	53					
54					55			■	56			
57				■	58			■	59			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Justin Jeffre, 36; Sean Astin, 38; Tom Courtenay, 72; Sally Jessy Raphael, 74

Happy Birthday: Take care of emotional matters this year. Your creative spin to an old idea will interest someone you have not talked to in a long time. Reconnect by making the first move. The results will positively affect how far ahead you get this year. Your numbers are 10, 12, 16, 21, 26, 34, 49

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Judge your next move based on your own position and what you want to see unfold. Talks will help but only with those who are already on board. It's OK to sit back and observe. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): A past problem at work will surface again if you didn't take care of it the first time around. Rely on your allies in order to win a better position. It's all about standing up for your rights. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Someone will pull a fast move that could derail your plans. Uncertainty regarding some of your social and family relationships must be put aside and not be allowed to influence what needs to be done immediately. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You've got more going for you than you realize. Take a stab at something you enjoy doing. Changes to your environment will enable you to find a space that contributes to your comfort and peace of mind. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Love is skyrocketing and solid ground can be found on which to build your life. Past connections that were never allowed to develop will now help to fulfill your dreams, hopes and wishes for the future. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You've got a lot at stake and if you don't resolve past issues first, you may lose out on something good. A little fancy talking and a few crucial maneuvers and you should be in the ballpark for an opportunity that develops. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Your best offers will come from the past and, with your ability to develop and creatively and intelligently put things together, you will find yourself placed in a key position. Social activities and networking will be to your advantage. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Get out and about where you can breath easy and discover what it is you really want to see happen. Get away from your normal routine and negative people. It will help you gain a clear picture of what you must do. It's up to you to bring about positive change in your life. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Someone will try to outmaneuver you by making last-minute alterations or decisions. Don't fall into an unstable trap. Follow your heart and stay within your means financially, mentally and emotionally. Positive changes should be made at work and at home. ✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Everything will be dependent on how you feel and what you do. Don't let an emotional relationship cause you to second-guess your next move. An interesting change in what you do to earn a living will allow you to go in a direction that has always interested you. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You'll be looking through rose-colored glasses and must give yourself a reality check. Put things in perspective. You may be surprised to find out who's been watching and waiting for you to notice him or her. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Be forgiving, open and respectful of others. Consider your own faults and fix anything you have left unfinished. Change will bring about stability and a better future. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, caring and compassionate. You have great faith in who you are and what you can do. You are a humanitarian and a good friend.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

					2	1	3	8
	1	2		4			9	
	7		3			6		
		1			3			
	3				9			
5			2	6		3		
8		6			5		7	1
2	4					5	6	
1						9		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	1	5	4	9	3	7	2	6
2	3	9	6	1	7	8	5	4
6	4	7	2	5	8	3	1	9
4	9	3	8	6	1	5	7	2
5	8	2	7	3	9	6	4	1
1	7	6	5	4	2	9	8	3
3	6	8	1	7	4	2	9	5
9	2	1	3	8	5	4	6	7
7	5	4	9	2	6	1	3	8

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/25

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE SEYCHELLES ISLANDS Solution: 6 letters

(V)	D	G	S	N	E	I	H	C	O	E	T	I	V	Y
(A)	R	I	N	I	T	N	E	R	O	L	F	B	E	T
(R)	E	A	V	P	R	A	S	L	I	N	R	E	L	A
(S)	M	N	U	E	H	C	N	E	R	F	E	A	I	E
A	E	T	N	C	S	C	A	Y	S	P	C	U	D	R
L	D	S	V	A	A	E	I	L	U	M	A	V	O	T
T	O	E	E	I	E	P	S	R	E	E	F	A	C	R
W	C	C	N	T	C	T	E	I	L	K	O	L	O	A
A	O	L	O	I	N	T	N	I	O	A	R	L	R	D
T	C	W	O	C	S	A	O	I	L	T	Y	O	C	E
E	E	U	O	C	O	B	R	R	A	O	R	N	N	R
R	D	R	I	B	K	S	T	I	I	S	T	O	E	S
T	A	S	D	N	A	L	S	I	M	A	Y	U	T	K
L	E	S	U	E	I	R	U	C	M	A	H	E	N	A
T	A	K	A	M	A	K	A	E	M	Y	N	O	N	A

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Amirantes, Anonyme, Au Cap, Austronesian, Beau Vallon, Bird, Boileau, Cays, Cerf, Chiens, Clock, Coco De Mer, Cocos, Coetivy, Coral, Crocodile, Curieuse, Denis, Dive, Florentin, French, Giant, Ilot, Islands, Kenya, Mahe, Praslin, Reef, Rupee, Sainte Anne, Saltwater, Snorkel, Takamaka, Tortoises, Tower, Traders, Treaty, Tuna, Vars, Victoria

Yesterday's Answer: Scenic

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

NE WS

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Find today's solution in this section

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Job Description:
- Execute the sales plan to achieve company sales goals.
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  - Sell company product portfolio in lin with channel distribution guidelines.
  - Complete appropriate order tracking and reporting forms.
- Merchandise regular shelf products in proper rotation to generate orders
  - Check product code dates and ensure proper rotation.
  - Update pricing and basic POS.
  - Work with merchandiser to properly supply POS and build and maintain displays.
- Communicate with sales manager and marketing department providing market information.
  - Report market information and feedback to supervisors/managers and marketing.
  - Work with marketing department to develop and execute promotional plans - islandwide or channel tailored.
- Execute Key Account promotional plans with merchandiser and marketing support. Lead execution of all promotions in accounts.

Merchandiser
(BEVERAGE)

Job Description:
- Execute the sales plan to achieve company sales goals.
  - Ensure product is properly rotated in all accounts.
  - Maintain correct, visible pricing for each SKU in all accounts.
  - Build and maintain displays as agreed with sales rep for promotional and non-promotional periods.
  - Enxure shelf sets meet channel guidelines for all brands.
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- Ensure strong retail relationships with appropriate department managers and store personnel.
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www.wish.org
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M-F daily

Saipan Tribune

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HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
PROMOTIONAL & OPEN COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Education, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, that the Public School Personnel System shall be applied and administered according to the principles of equal employment opportunity as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Public Law 6 - 10, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, handicap or place of origin. Applicants for this position must be a U.S. Citizen or be eligible and authorized to work in the U.S., including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Announcement No: **PSS-072-2007** Application & Employment Type: **Non-Certified**
(Amendment/Re-Announcement III)
Position Title: **Procurement & Supply Officer**
Pay Level/Step: **35 / 01-12** Per Annum Salary: **$28,807.51 - $49,266.21**
Opening Date: **February 10, 2009** Closing Date: **February 25, 2009**
Location: **PSS – Procurement & Supply Office, Administrative Services Division**

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Harris half-court shot gives Nets win

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—The New Jersey Nets needed something outrageous to beat the Philadelphia 76ers. Devin Harris provided it with a half-court heave to beat the buzzer that needed a long review before it counted.

Harris hit an unbelievable lunging 47-footer at the horn and the Nets snapped a season-high five-game losing streak with a 98-96 victory over the slumping 76ers on Monday night.

"It's the great thing about this game," Nets coach Lawrence Frank said. "These players are so talented, they make freakish shots. Not that it's a rehearsed shot. I don't know if Devin's doing it in the gym, but the basketball gods were with us tonight."

While there was no question the shot swished, officials Derrick Stafford, Violet Palmer and Pat Fraher had to watch replays of the heave for 2 1/2 minutes with players from both team staring over their shoulders.

"I didn't want to look at the replay," said Harris, who stood near the center jump circle while the review took place. "I just kept my head down, waiting for a reaction. On the court, I was looking at Violet and she was telling me 'no good.' That was the first thing that I saw."

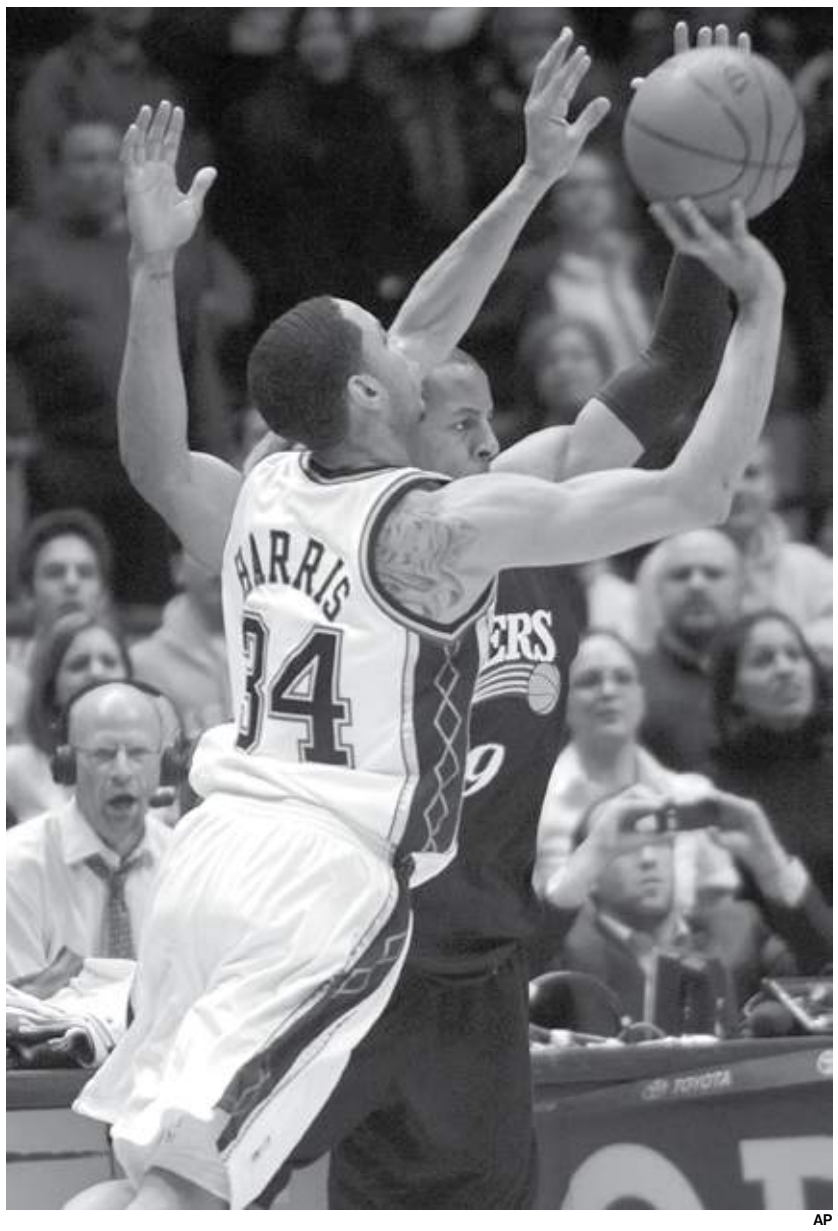
Stafford said the original call on the court was that the basket was not good.

However, the replay showed conclusively that the shot left Harris' hands before the clock hit all zeros, and Stafford eventually gave a touchdown signal, setting off a celebration among Nets players and fans.

"After the review, everyone was jumping up and down, going crazy," said Harris, who scored a game-high 39 points. "We'll take it any way we can."

The loss was the fourth straight for the 76ers, and it was tough to take.

"This was a real disappointment because I felt we played well enough to win the game," Philadelphia coach Tony DiLeo said. "To put up a shot like Devin Harris did was heartbreaking for our team."



AP

New Jersey Nets' Devin Harris (34) shoots a half-court shot at the buzzer as he is guarded by Philadelphia 76ers' Andre Iguodala to beat the 76ers 98-96 in an NBA basketball game Monday, Feb. 23, 2009 in East Rutherford, N.J.

Seconds earlier, the 76ers seemingly nailed down the victory when Andre Iguodala sank the second of two free throws to give them a one-point lead with 1.8 seconds to play.

With no timeouts left, the Nets inbounded from under their defensive basket to Harris, who bobbled the ball after bumping with Iguodala and then heaved in the winner from in front of the scorer's table.

"I thought a lot was going on for 1.8 seconds," Iguodala said. "I thought for sure it wasn't good and I still don't think it was good."

Knicks 123, Pacers 119

At New York, Nate Robinson scored a season-high 41 points, including the tiebreaking layup with 26 seconds left, as New York beat Indiana.

Robinson scored 32 in the second half, helping the Knicks pull out a game against a team missing most of its best players. Al Harrington added 27 points and David Lee had 20 points and 13 rebounds for the Knicks.

Jarrett Jack scored a season-high 33 points and Marquis Daniels matched a season best with 28 for the Pacers, who had won two in a row overall and four in a row at Madison Square Garden. They fell to 4-2 when playing without both All-Star Danny Granger and Mike Dunleavy. Troy Murphy had 19 points and 21 rebounds for the Pacers.

Celtics 114, Nuggets 76

At Denver, Ray Allen scored 26 points and Paul Pierce had 22 as Boston handed Denver one of its worst ever home losses.

It was Boston's second game since Kevin Garnett strained a muscle in his right knee that is expected to sidelined him for at least two weeks.

Rajon Rondo, coming off a career-high 32 points in Boston's 20-point win at Phoenix on Sunday, added 14 points for the Celtics, who raced to a 60-37 halftime lead that rendered the second half a let's-get-it-over-with exercise.

This was Denver's worst home loss since Feb. 2, 1998, when the Nuggets were routed by Chicago 111-72. The 38-point margin of defeat tied for the second-biggest home loss since Denver joined the NBA in 1976.

J.R. Smith had 19 points and Carmelo Anthony 18 for the Nuggets.

Jazz 108, Hawks 89

At Salt Lake City, Deron Williams had 15 points and 10 assists and Utah welcomed back Carlos Boozer from a three-month absence with a win over Atlanta.

The Jazz won their fifth straight and got to use Boozer sparingly in his first game since Nov. 19, when he injured a tendon in his left quadriceps. The two-time All-Star also had knee surgery to remove cartilage in January and was finally back Monday after missing 44 straight games. He finished with two points and five rebounds as the rest of the Jazz handled the scoring.

Joe Johnson had 15 points to lead the Hawks, who lost their 15th straight game at Utah.

Hornets 112, Kings 105

At Sacramento, California, Chris Paul had 27 points and 13 assists as New Orleans Hornets held off a fourth-quarter rally by Kevin Martin and Sacramento.

David West had 24 points and nine rebounds for the Hornets, who had lost two straight and eight of 12. Tyson Chandler, playing his first game since New Orleans tried to trade him to Oklahoma City, had 15 points and 10 rebounds.

Kevin Martin scored 24 of his 32 points in the fourth period for the Kings, setting a new Arco Arena record for points in a quarter.

Clippers 118, Warriors 105

At Los Angeles, Zach Randolph had 27 points and 11 rebounds and Eric Gordon also scored 27 points as the Los Angeles Clippers downed Golden State to snap a three-game losing streak. Gordon had a career-high six 3-pointers and has scored 21-plus points in each of his last five games for the Clippers, who beat the Warriors for the first time since Nov. 2, 2007.

Baron Davis added 25 points and 10 assists for the Clippers, who got off to a slow start and were without starter Al Thornton, missing his second game of the season with a right foot injury.

Stephen Jackson had 28 points and C.J. Watson added 16 for the Warriors.

Wade needs more help on offense

MIAMI (AP)—Dwyane Wade needs a wingman.

Sunday's defeat at Orlando counts as one loss for the Miami Heat, but Wade's teammates were outscored twice.

- There was Magic 122, Heat 99.
- And Wade 50, Rest of Heat 49.

Wade's career-high 50 points in the blowout loss brought new light to an old problem, with the Heat again asking their MVP candidate to bear an inordinate amount of the offensive load.

"Dwyane's a great player, but he can't do it by himself," Heat forward Udonis Haslem said.

Never was that more visible than Sunday.

It's the first time this season a player reached 50 in a losing effort, and the first time since March 14, 1995—when Dana Barros had 50 for Philadelphia in a 136-107 defeat against Houston—that someone scored so many and his team lost by 20-plus points.

The rest of Miami's starters combined for 15 points. Not exactly a shot of momentum heading into another game with postseason implications Tuesday, at home against Detroit.

With the playoff drive in full swing, the Heat still seek a bona fide second scoring option.

"There's some concerns," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra acknowledged.

Through Sunday, 131 different NBA players have scored more than 25 points in at least one game this season. Some teams have as many as six players to do so, and Chicago's roster now has seven players fitting into that category (only five actually scored that many for the Bulls; newly acquired Brad Miller and John Salmons did so for Sacramento before getting traded to the Windy City).

Miami? Just Wade.

Every other team has at least three players with 26-point games this season.

"We know that everyone has to do their job and play their role," Haslem said.

Jermaine O'Neal has a 36-point game, but got that for Toronto before being traded to Miami. Shawn Marion (who went to Toronto in that deal) and Michael Beasley both had 25-point efforts for this season's Heat, but no Wade teammate has eclipsed that plateau.

O'Neal, who scored six points against the Magic, apologized to Wade for not doing more.

"That's the reason why they brought me here, to be able to score in the low post and make plays and defend," O'Neal said. "In every aspect, I kind of failed the test."

He wasn't alone, and this trend started long ago.

Since last season began, Paul Pierce has watched a Boston teammate score more than 25 points on 30 occasions. Someone other than Kobe Bryant has done it for the Los Angeles Lakers 19 times, and one of LeBron James' teammates in Cleveland has managed that many 13 times.

In Miami's 2006 championship season alone, there were 20 games where someone other than Wade topped 25 points.

It's happened 15 times since.

"No player alone can carry anything and I've never, ever thought that," Wade said. "Anybody who thinks that is crazy. It takes a team to win."

Wade had 27 points at halftime. Of Miami's first 55 points, Wade accounted for 42 of them, scoring 33 and setting up the other nine with assists.

"He was absolutely tremendous," marveled Magic coach Stan Van Gundy, Wade's first coach in Miami.

Wade had 44 points through three quarters. At that point, the only drama was whether he'd hit 50.

After returning to the game with 7:36 remaining, he quickly made a jumper and two free throws to tie his previous career-best, and even opponents were enjoying the show.

NBA BRIEFS

McGrady to have knee surgery

HOUSTON (AP)—Houston Rockets star Tracy McGrady is having season-ending surgery on his left knee. McGrady has been bothered all season by soreness and finally said last week he had decided to have the risky surgery, scheduled for Tuesday in Chicago. The team had never officially confirmed McGrady would have surgery, and general manager Daryl Morey said last week that the Rockets wanted to talk to McGrady about his decision. McGrady has been consulting with doctors since the All-Star break. He's missed Houston's last four games and 21 overall because of lingering soreness in the knee, the aftermath of arthroscopic surgery last May.

Nene day-to-day with bruised knee

DENVER (AP)—Denver Nuggets forward Nene has a bone bruise on his right knee and won't play in Monday's game against the Boston Celtics. The tests showed that his knee has no structural damage. He is listed day-to-day. Nene was injured in the final minute of Denver's 120-117 loss at Milwaukee on Sunday when he banged knees with Bucks forward Richard Jefferson. Nuggets forward Kenyon Martin, who has missed the past 1Ω games with back spasms is a game-time decision.

Barkley pleads guilty in Scottsdale to DUI charges

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Charles Barkley will serve time in jail after pleading guilty Monday to charges of driving drunk. According to Scottsdale court records, the 45-year-old former NBA star pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor charges related to the same drunken driving arrest. Barkley, who works as a TV analyst, is set to begin a five-day jail sentence on March 21. The Hall of Famer must pay more than $2,000 in fines and attend an alcohol treatment program. Under Arizona law, he'll also be forced to install an ignition interlock device on his vehicles. His attorney was not immediately available for comment.

Lasorda: A-Rod's admission 'shocked me'

AP

New York Yankees third baseman Alex Rodriguez, left, Mark Teixeira, right, and Johnny Damon, second from right, speak to Yannkees General Manager Brian Cashman at the George M. Steinbrenner field during spring training, Saturday, Feb. 21, 2009 in Tampa, Fla.

MIAMI (AP)—Tommy Lasorda's relationship with Alex Rodriguez goes back nearly two decades, all the way to when the teenage A-Rod decided in high school that he wanted to sign his first contract with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Lasorda's affinity for the Yankees third baseman has waned considerably in recent weeks.

In Miami to promote the upcoming World Baseball Classic, Lasorda said Monday that Rodriguez's recent admission that he took a banned substance from 2001 through 2003 while playing for the Texas Rangers was a stunner he didn't expect.

"I never thought about him ever taking steroids," Lasorda said. "So when it did, that just shocked me. Shocked me. I didn't think he would do that."

Lasorda may be baseball's hardest-working ambassador these days, his calendar routinely filled by stops at various dinners to either deliver keynote addresses, pick up awards, or both in some cases. And he never turns down a chance to discuss the World Baseball Classic, which he puts on par with the Olympics in terms of the impact it could have on the collective fan base of a nation.

But everywhere he goes now, the A-Rod question is looming.

"Sure, it changes my perception of him as a person and what he did, absolutely," said Lasorda, the former Dodgers manager who's entering his 60th year with the organization. "And I feel so bad about that. The guy, he was always somebody special. We established that relationship. ... I just had so much respect, so much really good feeling about him. I never thought that he would have done it."

It's been more than two weeks since Sports Illustrated reported Rodriguez was among 104 names on a list of players who tested positive during baseball's anonymous drug survey in 2003. The three-time AL MVP acknowledged using a banned substance to ESPN two days later and has spoken publicly about it since.

Lasorda can't help but wonder why Rodriguez stands alone, the only player on that list of 104 to be identified so far.

"If his name is out, then everybody's name should be out," Lasorda said.

Would any name on that list surprise him?

"Not after him, no," Lasorda said.

Rodriguez was the nation's most-coveted high school player when he was a senior at Westminster Christian. The Seattle Mariners had the No. 1 pick in the draft, but Rodriguez wanted to sign with the Dodgers—and told the Mariners as such, saying he would enroll at the University of Miami if they used the first selection on him.

Seattle drafted him anyway, eventually signed him to a $1.3 million deal after some contentious negotiations. The Dodgers used the No. 2 pick on Darren Dreifort.

"Every time I saw Alex or he saw me, there was always that really great relationship," Lasorda said. "And I thought, 'Boy, here's a guy who should take over that home run record eventually.'"

Even with the steroid issue now dominating talk around the game perhaps more than ever before, Lasorda doesn't believe the A-Rod story will keep fans away from ballparks this season.

Attendance set records last year in a failing economy, and Lasorda doesn't think the continued financial problems facing the nation—or any talk of steroids, either—will harm the game.

"There's so many obstacles that we've had to overcome and still people want to go out and see a baseball game," Lasorda said. "Times are tough and they still want to go out and see a game. That's relaxation, time to put the family together. Going out to dinner costs more than a baseball game. And nobody is bigger than baseball. Nobody."

Barry Bonds' personal trainer ordered to court

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—A federal judge has ordered Barry Bonds' personal trainer, Greg Anderson, to court to disclose whether he intends to testify at the slugger's trial next month.

U.S. District Judge Susan Illston scheduled a hearing for Wednesday morning and ordered the U.S. Marshals Service to tell Anderson and provide him with transportation, if needed.

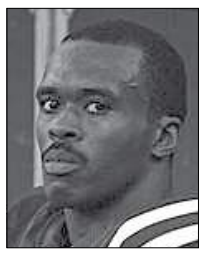
The judge has barred prosecutors from using key evidence, such as positive steroids tests, at Bonds' March 2 trial unless Anderson testifies.

Anderson has said through his attorney he will refuse to testify, and he may be sent to prison on contempt of court charges. Anderson was sent to prison after refusing to testify about Bonds before a federal grand jury in 2006.

Colts agree to release Marvin Harrison

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Marvin Harrison refused to take a pay cut. The Indianapolis Colts couldn't afford to keep him without one.

On Monday, the two sides reached agreement on one thing: Harrison will be a free agent.



Harrison

Agent Tom Condon told The Associated Press that Indianapolis has agreed to release the franchise's all-time leading receiver, although an official announcement is not expected until Tuesday or Wednesday.

The decision comes one day after team president Bill Polian said he hoped to cut a deal that would keep Harrison in Indy. When Harrison said no, the Colts said farewell.

"Basically, we were not able to come to any kind of agreement, it was not contentious and the Colts have agreed to release him," Condon said in a phone interview.

Team officials declined comment and a message was left by The Associated Press at the office of team owner Jim Irsay.

It's not a surprising move because the Colts would save about $6 million, based on Harrison's base salary. They would still be charged for prorated bonuses from the $66 million deal he signed in December 2004.

The Colts found it too expensive for a 36-year-old receiver coming off one of the least productive seasons of his career.

Harrison ranks second in NFL history with 1,102 receptions, and the move will disappoint many Colts fans, who embraced Harrison as a favorite. They referred to Harrison, Peyton Manning and Edgerrin James as "The Triplets," and Harrison was one of the franchise's most identifiable player in the last decade.

His penchant for toe-tapping catches along the sideline and incredible grabs in the middle of the field helped the Colts build one of the league's most successful franchises in this decade.

But longtime teammates understood why Harrison wanted to become a free agent.

"I think whatever Marvin chooses to do for himself, he has to do," center Jeff Saturday said Sunday night. "I love Marvin as a friend and as a teammate."

Indianapolis took Harrison in the first round of the 1996 draft and when Manning arrived two years later, the tandem began a record-setting journey.

They combined for more completions, yardage and touchdowns than any duo in league history.

Harrison made eight Pro Bowls, won a Super Bowl ring, and his 14,550 yards rank fourth on the NFL's career list. He is No. 5 all-time with 128 TD catches and holds all major single-season and career receiving marks for the Colts.

Over the past two seasons, though, Harrison hasn't been up to his usual standards.

He missed all but five games in 2007 because of injuries, underwent offseason knee surgery and then caught 60 passes in 2008—far less than half of his NFL record 143 in 2002.

Philadelphia police also believe one of Harrison's guns was used in an April shooting in his hometown. No charges were filed against Harrison, and the man who made the accusation was convicted on a misdemeanor charge of lying to police.

On the field, Manning has looked more frequently for three-time Pro Bowl selection Reggie Wayne and Anthony Gonzalez, a first-round pick in 2007.

Yet coaches and Polian insisted Harrison's skills had not deteriorated.

"What I saw is a guy who is as quick as he's been, with the same hands, and he has the ability he's always had," new coach Jim Caldwell said Thursday at the NFL's annual scouting combine.

And Polian insisted he still wanted Harrison back in his familiar No. 88 jersey.

"Hopefully, we'll find a way to work through that (the contract)," Polian said Sunday. "I don't know if we will, but we hope to."

They couldn't.

Now Harrison will look for work elsewhere. Some have speculated that he would like to play with his hometown Eagles and former college teammate Donovan McNabb.

The Colts will have a vastly different look next season.

Former coach Tony Dungy retired in January and was replaced by Caldwell. Caldwell has hired new defensive and special teams coordinators and three of the four longest-tenured players on the roster are heading to free agency, which opens Friday.

Saturday said Sunday night he intended to test the market despite getting an offer from the Colts late last week. Punter Hunter Smith's agent, Thomas Mills, said last week Indy would not try to re-sign Smith before free agency began.

And now Harrison will join them on the open market.

Falcons part ways with Lawyer Milloy

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. (AP)—Safety Lawyer Milloy, a four-time Pro Bowler, will not be returning to the Atlanta Falcons.

The team announced it will not re-sign the 35-year-old Milloy, who can pursue other options when free agency begins on Friday.

Milloy was the Falcons' starting safety the last three years. This past season, he was third on the team in both solo tackles (76) and overall stops (117).

"As an organization, we felt it was in the best interest of both parties to let Lawyer test the free agent market," Atlanta general manager Thomas Dimitroff said. "He significantly contributed in his three seasons with the Falcons and we were proud to have him here. We wish him the best as he takes the next step in his career."

Milloy, raised in Tacoma, Wash., has expressed a desire to return home to finish his career with the Seattle Seahawks, who are now led by former Falcons coach Jim Mora.

Milloy broke in with the New England Patriots after being drafted in the second round in 1996. He played seven seasons with the Patriots and three with the Buffalo Bills before signing with the Falcons in 2006.

Even though he provided leadership to a young secondary, the Falcons decided to pursue younger options at safety, perhaps through the draft.

Docomo shares Navy Hill lead, Taco Bell wins

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Docomo forced a tie for the lead in the 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League after outclassing Rollers Basketball Club, 94-87, Sunday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

The win was Docomo's eighth in nine games, putting them in a tie for first place with Dollar Days. Rollers dropped to third place, absorbing their first loss in eight games.

Docomo led by as much as 15 points at halftime, 51-36, but Rollers threatened to come back in the second half with Pete Iguel and Manny Matagolai combining for 22 points and moving their team within four, 65-69, entering the fourth period.

Rollers kept Docomo within striking distance at the start of the payoff canto, until timely baskets from Ponce Rasa and Robert Sanciangco secured the win for Docomo.

Rasa had nine markers in the fourth period and finished with a game-high 26 points, while Sanciangco chipped in eight.

Four other Docomo players finished in double figures for the team's balance offense. Chris Kochman nailed 17, Gil Miranda fired 14, and James Lee and Jerry Diaz contributed 12 and 10 points, respectively.

Iguel led the Rollers with 25 points.

In the second game, KFC/Taco Bell outgunned the San Antonio Shooters in the fourth period, 39-19, to notch a 93-81 victory.

The win was Taco Bell's fifth in eight games, while the loss was the Shooters seventh in nine matches.

Taco Bell was down by five at the end of the third quarter, 55-60, when Bonbon Cadagat and J.R. Concepcion anchored a scoring spree in the payoff canto.

Cadagat exploded for 17 fourth-quarter points, while Concepcion tallied 10 to help Taco Bell recover and steal the win.

First Game

KFC/Taco Bell 93 – Cadagat 27, Concepcion 21, Lerio 16, Hugos 13, Itibus 7, Johnson 6, Tumaquip 3.

San Antonio 81 – Tabora 26, Samparada 13, Galulu 10, Zapata 11, Mangali 9, Palma 7, Feliciano 6.

Scoring by quarters: 20-17, 41-37, 55-60, 93-81.

Second Game

Docomo 94 – Rasa 26, Kochman 17, Miranda 14, Lee 12, Diaz 10, Rob. Sanciangco 8, Echavez 2, Lagandaso 2.

Rollers 87 – Iguel 25, Matagolai 20, P. Camacho 15, D. Teregeyo 7, Tudela 6, V. Teregeyo 4, Ulloa 3, J. Camacho 2, Namelo 2.

Scoring by quarters: 30-24, 51-36, 69-65, 94-87.

Falcons overpower D'9ers, 13-3

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Even with a new coach, the Tanapag Falcons want to keep their baseball tradition intact.

"Baseball is what Tanapag is known for and we will try our best to make our mark this year just like what we have been doing in the past," said team manager Manny Evangelista, who debuted with a morale-boosting victory in the 2009 Saipan Major League.

The Falcons overpowered the D'9ers, 13-3, on the second day of action Monday night at the Francisco "Tan Ko" M. Palacios Baseball Field.

"We have high hopes," Evangelista said after the easy win.

He replaced Isidoro Camacho, who is busy managing in the Little League.

The Falcons, who last won the title in 2007 after beating the Masters in the championship, are fighting this year with a strong batting lineup. They were tied for third last year with the D'9ers.

"Once we start hitting, we are confident to win," he said.

Paul Camacho struck out six batters after the seven-inning game due to the 10-run rule. He allowed six hits, a walk, and a hit by pitch.

The Falcons scored five runs from Pat Camacho, John Acosta, John Tenorio, Bob Lizama, and Jeff Tenorio in the bottom of the second inning, while catcher Erik Tenorio added one in the third.

They added four more runs in the fourth from Bob Lizama, Jeff Tenorio, Bob Bansil, and Erik Tenorio and the Falcons took a commanding 10-1 lead.

Bansil and Lizama also reached home plate in the sixth and seventh, respectively, as they wrapped up the win on an out by Mike Pangelinan, who was hit by the ball while running from second to third by a grounder from teammate Kelly Heliew.

Outfielder Leo Dikito posted two runs for D'9ers in the third and seventh and one from Jo Dikito in the sixth.

With the victory, the Falcons now share the lead with defending champion Rock Steady, which opened its campaign with a 6-5 win over Ford Rangers.

Tomorrow's game will be between Masters and Korean Phoenix starting at 6:30pm.

OL'ACES

From Page 28

riod, which ended with Docomo grabbing the lead, 38-34.

The third canto was another neck-and-neck battle with Pelisamen adding eight points and Elias Rangamar closing out the quarter with back-to-back triples to put Ol'Aces back in the driver's seat, 55-52.

Ol'Aces finished off Docomo with a string of triples in the fourth period with Pelisamen canning three treys and Rangamar drilling two.

In the second game, IT&E recovered from a slow start to eke out an eight-point win against the Runnin' Rebels.

IT&E scored only nine points in the first period and was behind, 9-14. But a 33-20 scoring binge in the second quarter put IT&E on track, as it took the lead at halftime, 42-34.

IT&E increased the lead to as much as 15 in the third period, 60-45, and never looked back from thereon.

Kae Bernardo and Sonny Ranola led IT&E's fifth win, nailing 24 and 21 points, respectively.

Syl Teregeyo scored 19 points for the Runnin' Rebels, who absorbed their fifth loss in a row.

First Game

Ol'Aces 77 – Pelisamen 40, Rangamar 18, P. Camacho 7, White 4, Iginoef 3, Omar 3, Renguul 2.

Docomo 70 – Jo. Villacrusis 18, Palacios 15, Manibusan 12, Ja. Villacrusis 11, Paul 10, Lee 4.

Scoring by quarters: 20-17, 34-38, 54-52, 77-70

Second Game

IT&E 82 – Bernardo 24, Ranola 21, Mendiola 11, Mendoza 10, Abuel 8, De Dios 8.

Runnin' Rebels 74 – Teregeyo 19, Norita 14, Ogumoro 13, Taisacan 8, Tumaquip 7, Lisua 6, Coldeen 4, Iguel 3.

Scoring by quarters: 9-14, 42-34, 62-49, 82-74.

JACQUE

From Page 28

ing out two new events (hurdles and shot put) a month before the big tournament.

"Last year was a struggle, as I was also busy doing canoe training for our school. I learned doing hurdles and shot put only for a month, but I thanked my coaches, Robin Sapong, Elias Rangamar, Kurt Barnes, and Ron Olopai, and the rest of NMA family for having patience in teaching me how to do these," the MHS student said.

"And of course my very supportive family, my mom Maggie, my dad Barry, my siblings Coral and Vaughn. Because of my involvement in various sports, I get to spend little time with them, but they are always there behind me," Wonenberg said.

Besides athletics and canoe, Wonenberg is also into basketball, volleyball, and soccer.

"My No. 1 sport, of course, is athletics, it is where I know I have a future. I wish I could play more sports, but 24 hours a day is not enough for me," said Wonenberg.

"I am not your usual student, who leaves home, goes to school, spend time with friends, and goes home, again. Most of the time, I am out training. But I don't regret it, as all the hard work I put into training and the sacrifices I, my coaches, and my family are doing paid off, as I won this award," she said.

Wonenberg claimed her fourth straight NMASA plum dating back to 2005. NMASA began giving student awards in 2004 with Bo Wang, also of athletics, winning the inaugural plum for a female student.

At 16, Wonenberg hopes opportunities will come her way, especially when she goes to college.

"I hope to run for a college team and get a scholarship. And when I am done with school, I also wish to coach so I share what I learned from my mentors," she said.

PATRIOTS

From Page 28

ers Christian Mizer and Jeremy Rabauliman helped the team deliver the beating from the mound.

Mizer also led the Patriots' offense with three runs in the first, third, and fourth innings. Jared Sablan and Rabauliman added two, while Franklin Santos, reliever Austin Lizama, Henry Rabauliman, and Richard Borja came up with one each.

The Patriots, who were champions in the Major Division the past three seasons, are now pacing the Junior Division with an unblemished record of 3-0 following their opening game triumph over the Red Sox, 13-4, last Feb. 16. The

The other team still undefeated in the Junior League is Ol'Aces at 2-0. They beat the Fielders last Feb. 16 by a big margin, 29-13, and also won over the Red Sox.

Ol'Aces tied defending champion Lion Heart, 5-5, in the opening game last Feb. 15. That game will be played at a later date.

Other results last weekend showed the Red Sox winning over Lion Heart, 7-5.

Jets lead Seniors League, 3-0

In the Senior League, defending champion Jets also streaked to their third straight win by walloping Kagman Lion King, 11-2, last Feb. 22.

The Jets earlier opened their title-retention bid with a hard-fought 5-4 decision against the Fielders. They also struggled before coming home with a 7-4 victory over Ol'Aces last Feb. 16.

Ol'Aces finally barged into the win column via 11-7 win against Lion King last Feb. 21, while the Fielders won their first game in two starts over D'9ers, 14-4.

Hustlers win back-to-back

In the Major Division, the UMDA Hustlers won consecutive games after beating the BoS Red Sox, 5-1, that duplicated their opening game win over the Dragons, 7-4, last Feb. 15.

Also winning on Saturday were Ol'Aces over Tanapag Braves, 5-0; Survivors over Kagman Little Lions, 7-1; and Century A's over As Matuis Twins, 9-8.

U-CON

From Page 28

place pair of Federica Tonon of Italy and Dawn Penebaker of Hawaii, and third place partners Jennifer Snyder and Mili Saiki.

Koester and Snyder will be joined by fellow returnees led by men's co-champion Paul Baxter and Phil Dalhausser, who was a co-winner fir the gold medal in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Koester is a hard-hitting pro and star player at University of Connecticut, where she is taking up her degree in Human Development-Services and Counseling.

The six-foot Koester booked a record 18 kills with no errors in 21 attempts in the NCAA.

She was named to three all-Big East teams, and in 1998 was also an AVCA all-district choice. She remained as the team's career leader in kills, and is in the top 10 in digs, blocks, aces, and hitting percentage.

Koester teamed up with Denise Johns to win the 2003 AVP Next National Championships, earning berths in four main draws in 2004. Following her consistent finishes, she had to play in just one qualifying tournament after that point in 2005.

Koester along with the other pros will be conducting beach volleyball clinic for the kids on March 14.

There will also be an exhibition match among the U.S., Japan, and Korean professionals, which would be opened to the public at the PIC beach volleyball courts on March 6.

This side event will start at 5pm.

Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association expresses appreciation to the sponsors that include Aon Insurance, Aqua Resort Club, Chong's Corporation, Delta Management Corporation, Glooay Mai Thai Spa, Gregg Elliott Artworks, Hertz, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Island Apparel, IT&E, KSPN2, LISS, Marianas Eye Institute, Mariana Resort & Spa, Marianas Trekking, MVA, Microl Corporation, No Ka Oi, NWA, PDI, Pacific Eagle Enterprises, PIC Guam, PIC Saipan, PTC, Saipan Grand Hotel, Seafix Inc., Shell Marianas, Star Sands Plaza, Stars & Stripes, Law Offices of Stephen J. Nutting, Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino, Topnotch, Traders Insurance, Triple J Wholesale, and WDI Saipan (Tony Roma's & Capricciosa's).

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	46	12	.793	–
Philadelphia	27	28	.491	17 1/2
New Jersey	25	32	.439	20 1/2
New York	24	32	.429	21
Toronto	22	36	.379	24

Southeast Division

Orlando	41	14	.745	–
Atlanta	32	24	.571	9 1/2
Miami	29	26	.527	12
Charlotte	22	34	.393	19 1/2
Washington	13	43	.232	28 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	43	11	.796	–
Detroit	27	27	.500	16
Milwaukee	28	31	.475	17 1/2
Chicago	25	31	.446	19
Indiana	24	35	.407	21 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	37	17	.685	–
Houston	35	21	.625	3
Dallas	33	22	.600	4 1/2
New Orleans	33	22	.600	4 1/2
Memphis	15	40	.273	22 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	37	20	.649	–
Portland	35	20	.636	1
Utah	34	23	.596	3
Minnesota	18	37	.327	18
Oklahoma City	13	43	.232	23 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	46	10	.821	–
Phoenix	31	24	.564	14 1/2
Golden State	20	37	.351	26 1/2
L.A. Clippers	14	43	.246	32 1/2
Sacramento	12	46	.207	35

Yesterday's Games

New York 123, Indiana 119
New Jersey 98, Philadelphia 96
Boston 114, Denver 76
Utah 108, Atlanta 89
New Orleans 112, Sacramento 105
L.A. Clippers 118, Golden State 105

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

BUDWEISER CAGING STANDINGS

CNMI Nationals	5	1
Ol'Aces	4	2
IT& E	4	2
Quichocho Law Office	3	3
Docomo	2	3
Diamond Auto Fixers	1	4
Runnin' Rebels	1	5

NAVY HILL BASKETBALL STANDINGS

Dollar Days	8	1
Docomo	8	1
RBC Rollers	7	1
MBI	4	3
Taco Bell/KFC	5	3
Uncle Ben	5	3
Inchcape	4	3
Athlete's Foot	3	3
IT& E	4	6
San Antonio Shooters	2	7
670 Rollers	1	10
Mobil	1	10

2008 NMASA Annual Awards Banquet

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

2008 NMASA Female Student Athlete of the Year Jacque Wonenberg, left, is joined by the monthly female student awardees in the awards ceremony of the 2008 NMASA Annual Awards Banquet at the Seaside Hill of the Saipan Grand Hotel.

From left, Male Athlete of the Month winners Jericho Cruz, Jack Kabiriel, Eli Wong (representing son Rezne), and Ji Hoon Heo.

2008 NMASA Female Student Athlete of the Year Jericho Cruz, right with male monthly student awardees.

Northern Marianas Athletics president Kurt Barnes, center, and vice president Lou Wabol, right, join athletics' awardees Yvonne Bennett, Jacque Wonenberg, and Elias Rangamar for a group photo.

Eli and Millet Wong receive the 2008 Male Athlete of the Year award won by son Rezne.

2008 NMASA Coach of the Year Elias Rangamar.

Family and friends of CNMI Sports Hall of Fame inductee Jess Wabol pose for a group photo after the awards ceremony.

CNMI Sports Hall of Fame inductee Jess Wabol, center, is flanked by Refaluwasch Golf Association president Jordon Kosam, left, and RGA handicap director Tony Rogolifoi in the awards ceremony of the 2008 NMASA Annual Awards Banquet.

Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan swimmers show their certificates of recognition. Thea Minor, left, won for tennis.

2008 Female Athlete of the Year Yvonne Bennett, center, poses with mother Lilian and father Ambrose.

Harris half-court shot gives Nets win

The New Jersey Nets needed something outrageous to beat the Philadelphia 76ers. Devin Harris provided it with a half-court heave to beat the buzzer that needed a long review before it counted. **24**

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Docomo shares Navy Hill lead, Taco Bell wins

Docomo forced a tie for the lead in the 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League after outclassing Rollers Basketball Club, 94-87, Sunday night at the Garapan Basketball Court. **26**

Ol'Aces, IT&E thwart foes

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Ol'Aces and IT&E notched separate wins Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium to remain in a deadlock at second place in the team standings in the 2008-2009 BANMI/ Budweiser Basketball League.

Ol'Aces thwarted Docomo, 77-70, giving the former its fifth win in seven games. IT&E also holds a 5-2 slate after an 82-74 triumph over the Runnin' Rebels.

Hotshot Freddie Pelisamen exploded for 40 points to lift Ol'Aces to a win in the seesaw game.

Pelisamen knocked down two triples in the opening period finishing with 12 points, as Ol'Aces took the lead, 20-17.

In the second quarter, there were several lead changes, as neither team could find its rhythm. Mel Manibusan made eight of his 12 in the second pe-

See OL'ACES on Page 26

The Ol'Aces Freddie Pelisamen, left, wards off Docomo's Christopher Paul during their game in the Budweiser caging Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

U-Con star to play again in Marianas Cup

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

U.S. pro Jenelle Koester will return for the upcoming 17th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival slated from March 6 to 8 at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Kanae Quinn, who is in charge of the event's marketing and media, said the 31-year-old Koester is one of the professional beach volleyball players who have already signified their intention to participate in the longest-running beach volleyball tournament in Micronesia.

Japanese and Korean pros have also sent feelers of their eagerness to join this year's event.

Koester, along with partner Kelley

Koester

Butcher, finished fourth last year behind eventual champion Yoko Miki and Chie Iwana of Japan, second

See U-CON on Page 26

Patriots undefeated after three games

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

The Patriots played solid in two straight days to take the early lead in the Junior Division of the 2009 season of the Saipan Little League.

Displaying their championship spirit, the Patriots completely dominated D'9ers, 18-5, last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" M. Palacios Ballfield.

Then on the next day, the Patriots needed only four and a half innings to post another easy 11-1 win over the Fielders.

Fielders catcher Patrick Tenorio was the lone player from his team to score a run in the third inning as Patriots pitch-

See PATRIOTS on Page 26

Survivors pitcher Caleb Takao in action in the team's 7-1 victory over the Little Lions in the 2009 Saipan Little League last Saturday.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Jacque surprised to win student plum

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

First of a six-part series

Track star Jacque Wonenberg admitted she attended the 2008 NMASA Annual Awards Banquet only to enjoy the company of friends and the food, and was not expecting to win the 2008 Female Student Athlete of the Year award.

"Honestly, I was there really to eat, be with my friends, and take my certificate for winning the June Female Athlete of the Month award," Wonenberg said.

"But in the end, I went home with the latte stone trophy given to 2008 Female Student Athlete of the Year and I was really surprised to have won it," she added.

The Marianas High School student said she thought her chances in winning the annual citation was slim because of the tougher competition in 2008.

"We have a lot of female student athletes who are equally as deserving to win the title as I am. Last season's competition for the student award was a lot tougher than in 2007," she said.

But Wonenberg still earned NMASA's nod after giving the CNMI its first gold medal in 12 years of competing in the Oceania Area Championships.

Wonenberg topped the heptathlon competition in the Oceania championships, which Saipan hosted in June last year.

She won the event despite her irregular training and try-

See JACQUE on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Jacque Wonenberg holds her fourth straight NMASA Female Student Athlete of the Year award given Thursday night at the Seaside Hall of Saipan Grand Hotel.